

# New York Saturday Journal

A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS  
AND SUMMER DAYS.

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No. 270.

## YOUTH'S DREAMS.

BY HARVEY HOWARD.

A silver brooklet laughingly sprung  
From its fount in the mountain at dawn;  
Through the wide valley its merry song rung,  
As it leaped o'er the rocks and was gone.  
Softly it rippled o'er pebbles and moss,  
Hiding its face from the gaze of the day,  
Or sparkled and glowed with a sun-given gloss,  
As it rapidly sped on its way.  
Soon it was joined by another sweet brook  
That came from a deep, shaded dell,  
Where in a jewel-strown, sweet sylvan nook  
Its waters of brilliancy fell.  
Just at the gloaming they met with a kiss,  
And lovingly mingled their quivering streams,  
Sweet was their low-murmured anthem of bliss,  
As the music that runs through a poet's dreams.  
Wider and wider the mingled stream ran,  
Deeper and deeper its current became,  
Till the sparkle that kindled it when it began  
Was grown to a glow of unperishing flame.  
Now the children played round and about it,  
And brilliant birds ruffled its flow,  
Till life was not living without it,  
With its ripple so sweet and its glow.  
On—onward it sped to the river  
That flowed through the plains to the sea;  
As they met, the lost brook, with a quiver,  
To low moaning changed all its sweet glee.  
For before it was queen of the streams,  
And now it is least in the flow,  
Naught is left but the memory of dreams  
That came in the night, long ago—  
Of dreams that its tide should grow greater,  
And wider its surface should be,  
That the glow of its heart should be brighter,  
And the streamlet grow to a sea!

## Victoria:

OR,

THE HEIRESS OF CASTLE CLIFFE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,  
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL  
MYSTERY," "THE RIVAL BROTHERS," ETC.

### CHAPTER IV.

TWELVE YEARS AFTER.

The great bell of Clifton cathedral was just ringing the hour of five. The early morning was dim with hazy mist, but the sky was blue and cloudless; and away in the east, a crimson glory was spreading, the herald of the rising sun. Early as the hour was, all was bustle and busy life in the town of Cliftonlea; you would have thought, had you seen the concourse of people in High street, it was noon instead of five in the morning. Windows, too, were opening in every direction; nightcapped heads being popped out; anxious glances being cast at the sky, and then the nightcaps were popped in again; the windows slammed down, and everybody making their toilet, eager to be out. Usually, Cliftonlea was as quiet and well-behaved a town as any in England, but on the night previous to this memorable morning, its two serene guardian angels, Peace and Quietness, had taken unto themselves wings and flown far away. The clatter of horses and wheels had made night hideous; the jingling of bells and shouts of children, and the tramp of numberless footsteps had awoke the dull echoes from midnight till daydawn. In short, not to keep any one in suspense, this was the first day of the annual Cliftonlea races—and Bartlemy fair, in the days of Henry the Eighth, was not a circumstance to the Cliftonlea races. Nobody in the whole town, under the sensible and settled age of thirty, thought of eating a mouthful that morning; it was sacrilege to think of such a groveling matter as breakfast on the first glorious day; and so new coats and hats, and smart dresses, were donned, and all the young folks came pouring out in one continuous stream toward the scene of action.

The long, winding road of three miles, between Cliftonlea and the race-course, on common everyday days, was the pleasantest road in the world—bordered with fragrant hawthorn hedges, with great waving fields of grain and clover on each hand, and shadowed here and there with giant beeches and elms. But it was not a particularly cool or tranquil tramp on this morning, for the throng of vehicles and foot-passengers was fearful, and the clouds of simooms of dust more frightful still. There were huge regimental caravans, whole troops of strolling players, gangs of gipsies, wandering minstrels, and all such roving vagabonds; great booths on four wheels, carts, drays, wagons, and every species of conveyance imaginable. There were equestrians, too, chiefly mounted on mules and donkeys; there were jingling of bells, and no end of shouting, cursing and vociferating, so that it was the liveliest morning that road had known for at least twelve months.

There rose the brightest of suns, and the bluest of skies, scorching and glaring hot. The volumes of dust were awful, and came rolling even into the town; but still the road was crowded, and still the cry was, "They come!" But the people and vehicles which passed were of another nature now. The great caravans and huge carts had almost ceased, and young England came flashing along in tandems, and dog-carts, and flies, and four-in-hands, or mounted on prancing steeds. The officers from the Cliftonlea barracks—dashing dragons in splendid uniforms—flow like the wind through the dust, and sporting country gentlemen in top-boots and knowing caps, and fox-hunters in pink, and betting-men, and blacklegs, book in hand, followed, as if life and death depended on their haste. In two or three more hours came another change—superb barouches, broughams, phaetons, grand carriages with coachmen and footmen in livery, magnificent



"Mother, I have come home again!"

horses in silver harness, rich hammercloths with coats of arms emblazoned thereon, came rolling splendidly up, filled with splendid ladies. All the great folks for fifty miles round came to the Cliftonlea races; even the Right Reverend the Bishop of Cliftonlea deigned to come there himself.

And the scene on the race-ground—who shall describe it? The circuses, the theaters, the refreshment booths, the thousand-and-one places of amusement and traps for catching money; the hundreds and hundreds of people running hither and thither over the green sward in one living sea; the long array of carriages drawn up near the race-ground and filled with such dazzling visions of glancing silk, and fluttering lace, waving plumes and beautiful faces. Then the air was filled with music from the countless performers, making up a sort of cat's concert, not unpleasant to listen to, and over all there was the cloudless sky and blazing August sun.

A group of officers standing near the course, betting-books in hand, were discussing the merits of the rival racers, and taking down wagers.

Vivia, owned by Sir Roland Cliffe, of Cliftonlea, and Lady Agnes, owned by Lord Henry Lisle, of Lisleham, were to take the lead that day.

"Two to one on Vivia!" cried Captain Douglas, of the light dragons.

"Done!" cried a brother officer. "I am ready to back the Lady Agnes against any odds!"

The bets were booked, and as Captain Douglas put his betting-book in his pocket with a smile on his lip, and his quick eye glanced far and wide, he suddenly exclaimed:

"And here comes the Lady Agnes herself, looking stately as a queen and fair as a lily, as she always does."

"Where?" said his superior officer, old Major Warwick, looking helplessly round through the spectators. "I thought Lady Agnes was a roan."

"I don't mean the red mare," said Captain Douglas, laughing, "but the real bona fide Lady Agnes herself—Lady Agnes Shirley. There she sits, like a princess in a play, in that superb pony phaeton."

"Handsomest woman in Sussex!" lisped a young ensign; "and worth no end of tin. That's her nephew, young Shirley, driving, and who is that little fright in the back seat?"

"That's her niece, little Maggie Shirley, and they say the heiress of Castle Cliffe."

"How can that be?" said the major. "I thought the estate was entailed."

"The Shirley estates are, but the castle and the village adjoining were the wedding-dower of Lady Agnes Cliffe when she married Doctor Shirley. So, though the Shirley property is strictly entailed to the nearest of kin, Lady Agnes can leave Castle Cliffe to her kitchen-maid if she likes."

"Has she no children of her own?" asked the major, who was a stranger in Cliftonlea, and a little stupid about pedigree.

"None now; she had a son, Cliffe Shirley—a splendid fellow he was, too. He was one of us, and as brave as a lion. We served together some years in India. I remember him so well, there was not a man in the whole regiment who would not have died for him; but he was a discarded son!"

"How was that? Lady Agnes looks more like an angel than a vindictive mother."

"Oh, your female angels often turn out to have the heart of Old Nick himself," said Captain Douglas, tightening his belt. "I don't mean to say she has, you know; but those Cliffes are infernally proud people. They all are. I have known some of their distant cousins, and so on, poor as old Job's turkey, and proud as the devil. Cliffe Shirley committed that most heinous of social crimes—a low marriage. There was the dickens to pay, of course, when my lady yonder heard it, and the upshot was, the poor fellow was disinherited. His wife died a year after the marriage; but he had a daughter. I remember his telling me of her a thousand times, with the stars of India shining down on our bygone. Poor Cliffe! he was a glorious fellow! but I have heard he was killed since I came home, scaling the walls of Monagoola, or some such place."

"Whom did he marry?"

"I forget, now. He never would speak of his wife; but I have heard she was a ballet-dancer, or opera-singer, or something of that sort."

"All wrong!" said a voice at his elbow. And there stood Lord Henry Lisle, slapping his boots with a ratan, and listening languidly.

"I know the whole story. She was a French actress. You've seen her a score of times. Don't you remember Mademoiselle Vivia, who took all London by storm some twelve years ago?"

"Of course, I do! Ah, what eyes that girl had! And then she disappeared so mysteriously, nobody ever knew what became of her."

"I know. Cliffe Shirley married her, and she died, as you have said, a year after."

"Captain Douglas gave an intensely long whistle of astonishment."

"Oh, that was the way of it, then? No wonder his lady mother was outrageous. A Cliffe marry an actress?"

"Just so!" drawled Lord Lisle, slapping the dust off his boots. "And if her son hadn't married her, her brother would! Sir Roland nearly went distracted about her."

"Oh, nonsense! He married that black-eyed widow—that cousin Charlotte of his, with the little boy—in half a year after."

"It's true, though! I never saw one half so frantically in love; and he hasn't forgotten her yet, as you may see by his naming his black mare after her."

"Captain Douglas laughed."

"And is it for the same reason you have named your red road-steed after Lady Agnes—eh, Lisle?"

Lord Lisle actually blushed. Everybody knew how infatuated the insipid young peer was about the haughty lady of Castle Cliffe, who might have been his mother; and everybody laughed at him, except the lady herself, who, in an uplifted sort of way, was splendidly and serenely scornful.

"Lovely creature!" lisped the ensign. "And those ponies are worth a thousand guineas, if they're worth one."

"How much! Where is she? Is she here?" cried Lord Lisle, who was mentally and physically rather obtuse, staring around him. "Oh, I see her! Excuse me, gentlemen, I must pay my respects."

Off went Lord Lisle like a bolt from a bow. The officers looked at each other and laughed.

"Now, you'll see the grandly-disdainful reception he'll get," said Captain Douglas. "The queasily descendant of the Cliffes treats the

lately-fledged lordling as if he were her foot-boy; and probably his grandfather shod her grandfather's horses."

The whole group were looking toward the glittering file of carriages, drawn up near the end of which was an exquisite phaeton, drawn by two beautifully-matched ponies of creamy whiteness. The phaeton had three occupants—a lady, looking still young and still beautiful, and eminently distinguished, dressed in flowing robes of black tulle, with a large lace shawl—gracefully worn more like drapery than a shawl—half-slipping off one shoulder, daintily gloved in black kid, and wearing a black tulle bonnet, contrasting exquisitely with the pearly fairness of the proud face, and shining bandeaux of flaxen hair. In those flaxen bandeaux not one gray hair was visible; and leaning back with languid hauteur, she looked a proud, indolent, elegant woman of the world, but not a widow wearing mourning for her only son.

Lady Agnes Shirley might have felt—widows with only sons mostly do—but certainly the world knew nothing of it. Her heart might break; but she was one who could suffer and make no sign.

Sitting beside her and holding the reins, pointing every thing out to her with vivid animation, talking with the greatest volubility, and gesticulating with the utmost earnestness, was a tall, dark-eyed, dark-haired, good-looking young giant, who, although only sixteen, was six feet high, and told his friends he wasn't half-done growing yet. He was Tom Shirley, an orphan, the son of Lady Agnes' late husband's youngest brother, now resident at Castle Cliffe, and senior boy in the college school of Cliftonlea. And that was Master Tom's whole past history, except that he was the best-natured, impetuous, fiery, rough, kind-hearted young giant, whose loud voice and loud strides brought uproar everywhere he went.

There was a third figure in the back seat—a small girl who looked ten, and who was in reality fifteen years old—Miss Margaret Shirley, the daughter of Doctor Shirley's second brother—like Tom, an orphan, and dependent on her aunt. She was dressed in bright rose silk, wore a pretty summer hat trimmed with rose ribbons; but the bright colors of robe and chapeau contrasted harshly with her dark, pale face. It was a wan, sickly, solemn, unsmiling little visage as ever child wore; with large, hollow gray eyes, neither bright nor expressive; sharp, pinched features, and altogether an inexplicably cowed and subdued look. Her hair was pretty—the only pretty thing about her—dark, and thick, and curly, as all the Shirleys were; but it could not relieve the solemn, sorrowful face, the pinched, angular figure, and everybody wondered what Lady Agnes could see in that fairy changeling; and shrugged their shoulders to think that she should reign in Castle Cliffe, whose mistresses had always been the country's boast for their beauty.

The knot of officers watching Lord Lisle had all their expectations realized. His profound bow received only the slightest and coldest answering bend of the haughty head. Then Tom Shirley jumped from the carriage, and digging his elbows into everybody's ribs who came in his way, tore like a fiery meteor through the crowd.

And then the horses were starting, and the officers had no time to think of any thing else. For some time, Vivia and Lady Agnes kept neck and neck. The excitement and betting were immense. Captain Douglas doubles his

wager—Vivia gets ahead—a shout arises—she keeps ahead—Lady Agnes is dead beat! and Vivia, amid a tremendous cheer, comes triumphantly in the winner.

"That's three thousand pounds in my pocket!" said Captain Douglas, coolly. "Hallo, Shirley! What's the row?"

For Tom Shirley was tearing along, very red in the face, his elbows in the ribs of society, and looking as much like a distracted meteor as ever. He halted in a high state of excitement at the captain's salute.

"The most glorious sight! Such a girl! You ought to see her! She's positively stunning!"

"Who's stunning, Tom? Don't be in a hurry to answer. You're completely blown."

"I'll be blown again, then, if I stop talking here! If you want to see her, come along, and look for yourself."

"I'm your man!" said the captain, thrusting his arm through Tom's and sticking his other elbow, after that spirited young gentleman's fashion, into the sides of everybody who opposed him. "And now relieve my curiosity, like a good fellow, as we go along."

"Oh, it's a tight-rope dancer!" said Tom. "Make haste, or you won't see her, and it's a sight to see, I tell you!"

"Is she pretty, Tom?"

"A regular trump!" said Tom. "Get out of the way, you old kangaroo, or I'll pitch you into the middle of next week."

This last apostrophe was addressed to a stout gentleman, who came along panting, and snorting, and mopping his face. And as the old gentleman and everybody else got out of the way of this human whirlwind in horror, they soon found themselves before a large canvas tent, around which an immense concourse of people, young and old, were gathered. A great pole, fifty feet high, stuck up through the middle of this tent, and a thick wire-rope came slanting down to the ground. Two or three big men, in a bright uniform of scarlet and yellow, were keeping the throng away from this, and a band of modern troubadours, with brass instruments in their mouths, were discoursing the "British Grenadiers." A very little boy was beating a very big drum in a very large way, so that when the captain spoke, he had to shout as people do through an ear-trumpet.

"How are we to get through this crowd to the tent, if the damsel you speak of is within it?"

"Oh, she'll be out presently!" said Tom; "she is going to give the common herd a specimen of her powers, by climbing up to the dizzy top of that pole, and dancing the polka mazurka, or an Irish jig, or something of that sort, on the top. And while we are waiting for her, just look here!"

The captain looked. On every hand there were huge placards, with letters three feet long, in every color of the rainbow, so that he who ran might read, and the text of these loud posters was somewhat in this fashion:

UNRIVALED ATTRACTION!  
Unprecedented Inducement!  
THE INFANT VENUS!  
The Pet and Favorite of the Royal Family, the Nobility, and Gentry of England!  
Come one! Come all!  
The Infant Venus! The Infant Venus! The Infant Venus!!!

Admission, 6d.; Children, half price.

By the time the captain had got to the end of this absorbing piece of literature, a murmuring and swaying motion of the crowd, told him that the Infant Venus herself had appeared in the outer world. There was a suppressed rush—the men in scarlet jackets flourished their batons dangerously near the noses of the dear public. There was an excited murmur: "Where is she? What is she like?"

"Oh, I can't see her!" And everybody's eyes were starting out of their heads to make sure that the Infant Venus was of real flesh and blood, and not an optical delusion. But soon they were satisfied. A glittering figure, sparkling and shining like the sunlight from head to foot, bearing the Union Jack of Old England in either hand, went fluttering up this slender wire. The crowd held its breath, the music changed to a quick, wild measure, and the beautiful vision floated up in the sunshine, keeping time to the exciting strain. It was the light, slender figure of a girl of thirteen or fourteen, with the little tapering feet gleaming in spangled slippers of white satin, the slight form arrayed in a short white gossamer skirt reaching to the knee; and, like the slippers, all over silver spangles. Down over the bare white shoulders waved such a glorious fall of golden-bronze hair, half waves, half curls, such as few children ever had before; and the shining tresses were crowned with ivy leaves and white roses. The face was as beautiful as the hair, but instead of the blue or brown eyes that should have gone with it, they were of intensest black, and veiled by sweeping lashes of the same color. The music arose, quicker and faster, the silvery vision, scintillating and shining, flashed up, and up, and up, with her waving flags, till she looked like a bright, white speck against the blue summer sky, and the lookers-on hushed the very beating of their hearts. One false step—one dizzy turn, and that white frock will cover a bleeding and mangled little form, and the bronze hair will be crimson in blood. But she is at the top; she is looking down upon them, she waves her flags triumphant in her eagle eyrie, and a mighty cheer goes up from a hundred throats, that makes the whole plain ring. And now the music changes again; it grows slower, and the fairy in silver spangles begins to descend. If she should miss, even now! But no, she is on



the ground even before they can realize it, and then there is another shout louder than the first; the band strikes up an "O Triumpher," and Tom and the captain take off their own hats and cheer louder than any of the rest. And the brave little beauty bows right and left, and vanishes like any other fairy, and is seen no more.

"Didn't I tell you she was stunning?" cried Tom, exultingly.

"Tom, you're an oracle! Is she going to do anything with it?"

"Lots of things—look at that rush!"

There was a rush, sure enough. The doors had been opened, and everybody was scrambling in pell-mell. Sixpences and threepences were flying about like hailstones in a March storm, and women and children were getting torn and "squeezed to death."

Tom and the captain fought their way through with the rest. Two people were taking money at the door in which they entered—a man and woman. They paid their sixpences, made a rush for a seat, and took it in triumph.

Still the crowd poured in—it might have been the beauty of the girl, her dizzying walk up the wire-rope, or the rumor of her dancing, that brought them, but certainly the canvas tent was filled from its sawdust pit to its tented roof. They were not kept long waiting for the rising of the curtain, either—the same thing was to be played at least half a dozen times that day, so the moments were precious; and the solemn green curtain went up in ten minutes, and they saw the youthful Venus rise up from the sea-foam, with her beautiful hair unbound, and floating around her, her white robes trailing in the brine, and King Neptune and Queen Amphitrite, and their mermaid court, and the graces and attendant sylphs, all around her. The scene was all sea and moonlight; and she floated, in her white dress, across the moonlit stage, like a fairy in a magic ring. The tent shook with the applause; and nobody ever danced in the applause; and nobody ever danced in the applause.

For the crown of beauty arose—Juno, Minerva and Venus were all there; and so was the arbiter and judge. Venus, says legendary lore, bore away the palm, as much on account of her scanty drapery as her unparalleled loveliness. The Venus standing before them there was scantily enough draped, Heaven knows! the dainty and uncovered neck and arms whiter than her dress, one as short as the heart of any ballet-dancer could desire, and oh! what another storm of applause there was when Paris gave her the gold apple, and Juno and Minerva danced a *pas de deux* of exasperation, and she floated round them like a spirit in a dream! And then she bowed and smiled at the audience, and kissed her fingertips to them, and vanished behind the green curtain; and then it was all over, and everybody was pouring out in ecstasies of delight.

"Isn't she splendid?" cried Tom, in transport. "She beats the ballet dancers I saw when I was in London, all to sticks. And then she is as good-looking as an enchanted princess in the Arabian Nights!"

"My dear Tom, moderate your transports. I wonder if there's any way of finding out anything more about her? I must confess to feeling a trifle interested in her myself."

"Let us ask the old codger at the door."

"Agreed."

The twain made their way to the door, where the old codger, as Tom styled the black-browed, sullen-looking man who had taken the money, stood counting over his gains with his female companion—a little, stooping, sharp-eyed, vixenish-looking old woman. The man looked up as Captain Douglas lightly touched him on the shoulder.

"See here, my friend, that is a very pretty little girl you have there?"

"Glad you like her!" said the man, with a sort of growl.

"I thought you would be. What's her name?"

"Her name? Can't you read? Her name is out there on them bills! Don't you see she is the Infant Venus?"

"But I presume, for the common uses of everyday life, she has another? Come, old fellow, don't be disobliging—let's hear it."

"Not as I know on," growled the questioned one, civilly.

Tom, combating a severe mental resolve to punch his head, then drew out a sovereign instead, and flourished it before his eyes.

"Look here, old chap! tell us all about her, and I'll give you this."

"I'll tell you," said the old woman, snapping with vicious eagerness at the money. "She's his daughter, and I'm his mother, and she's my granddaughter, and her name's Barbara Black! Give it here!"

Before Tom could recover his breath, jerked out of him by the volubility with which this confession was poured forth, the old woman had snatched the coin out of his hand, and was thrusting it, with a handful of silver, into her pocket, when a pleasant voice behind her exclaimed:

"Dear little Barbara, the prettiest little fairy that ever was seen, and the very image of her charming grandmother!"

All looked at the speaker—a gentleman in a canary-colored waistcoat, wearing gold studs and breastpin, a gold watch-chain with a profusion of shimmering gold tassels attached, a lemon-colored glove on one hand, and a great gold ring on the other, with a yellow seal that reached nearly to the second joint; a saffronish complexion, and yellow hair, that seemed to encircle his head like a glory—a gentleman who glittered in the sunlight almost as much as the Infant Venus herself, and whose cheerful face wore the pleasantest of smiles—a gentleman to make you smile from sympathy as you looked at him, and not at all to be afraid of; but as the grandmother of the Infant Venus laid her eyes upon him, she uttered a terrified scream, dropped the handful of gold and silver, and fled.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE PRIDGEMAN.

"Ah, Sweet, how are you?" said Tom, nodding familiarly to the new-comer. "What the dickens ails the old girl?"

"A hard question to answer. She is out a little, you know" (Mr. Sweet tapped his forehead significantly with his forefinger, and indicated the man)—"just a little here!"

"Can we speak to the Infant Venus?" asked Tom of the old codger.

"I tell you what, gents," was the angry reply. "I want you three to clear out of this! There are other ladies and gents coming in, and I can't be having you a-loitering round here all day! Come!"

"Quite right," said Mr. Sweet, in his pleasant way. "Mr. Tom, I heard Lady Agnes asking for you a short time ago. Captain Douglas, the major told me to say, if I found you, he had a little commission for you to execute. Mr. Tom, I believe her ladyship wishes to go home."

"All right!" said Tom, boyishly, moving away arm-in-arm with the captain; and turning

ing his head as he went: "Give my love to Barbara, you old bear, and don't let her be risking her precious little neck climbing up that horrid wire, or I'll break your head for you! Vale!"

With which gentle valedictory Tom and the captain moved away; and the doorkeeper looked after them with a growl; but he growled more when he found Mr. Sweet standing still before him, gazing up in his face with a soft smile, and showing no signs of moving.

"Come! get out of this!" he began, gruffly.

"Oh, no!" said Mr. Sweet. "By no means; not at all; not yet. 'Tis just the hour. Moore found that out, you know. I want to see the old lady who ran away."

"You will want it, then! Be off, I tell you!"

"My dear fellow, don't raise your voice in that unpleasant manner. People will hear you, and I'm sure you would regret it after. Do lead me to that dear old lady again—your mother, I think you said."

And Mr. Sweet patted him soothingly on the back.

"I'll break your neck!" cried the exasperated man, snatching up a cudgel that stood beside him, and flourishing it in a way that showed he was most unpleasantly in earnest, "if you stay another minute here."

The two men were looking straight at each other—the one with furious eyes, the other, perfectly serene. There is a magnetism, they say, in a calm, commanding human eye that can make an enraged tiger crouch and tremble. Mr. Sweet's eyes were very small, and were mostly hid under two thick, yellow eyebrows; but they were wonderful eyes for all that. The man with the stick was a big, stout fellow, who would have made two of him easily; but he slowly dropped his stick and his eyes, and crouched like a whipped hound before his master.

"What do you want?" he demanded, with his customary growl, "a coming and bullying a man what's been and done nothing to you. I wish you would clear out. There's customers coming in, and you're in the way."

"But I couldn't think of such a thing," said Mr. Sweet, quite laughing. "I couldn't, indeed, until I've seen the old lady. Dear old lady! do take me to her my friend."

Muttering to himself, but still cowed, the man led on through the rows of benches, pushed aside the green curtain, and jumped on the low stage. Mr. Sweet followed, and entered with him the temporary green-room, pausing in the doorway to survey it. A horrible place, full of litter and dirt, and disorder, and painted men and women, and children and noise, and racket, and uproar. There was a row of little looking-glasses stuck all round the wall, and some of the players were standing before them, looking unutterably ghastly with one cheek painted blinding red, and the other of a grisly whiteness.

And in the midst of all this confusion, "worse confounded," there sat the Infant Venus, looking as beautiful off the stage as she had done on it, and needing no paint or tawdry tinsel to make her so. And there, crouching down in the furthest corner, horribly frightened, as every feature of her old face showed, was the dear old lady they were in search of. The noise ceased at the entrance of the stranger, and all paused in their manifold occupations to stare, and the old woman crouched further away in her corner, and held out her shaking hands as if to keep him off. But Mr. Sweet, in his benevolent designs, was not one to be so easily kept off; and he went over and patted the old lady encouragingly on the back, as he had done her son.

"My good old soul, don't be so nervous! There is no earthly reason why you should tremble and look like this. I wouldn't hurt a fly, I wouldn't. Do compose yourself, and tell me what is the matter."

The old woman made an effort to speak, but her teeth chattered in her head.

"You said you were—you said—"

"Precisely! That was exactly what I said, that I was going to America; but I haven't gone, you see. I couldn't leave England, I couldn't really. England, my country, great and free, heart of the world, I leap to thee; and all that sort of thing, you know. What you're shaking yet. Oh, now, really, you mustn't, it quite hurts my feelings to see one at your time of life taking in this fashion. Permit me to help you up, and assist you to a chair. There is none—very well, this candle-box will do beautifully."

With which Mr. Sweet assisted the old lady to arise, placed her on the box, amid the wondering company, and smiling in his pleasant way around on them all, pursued his discourse.

"These good ladies and gentlemen here look surprised, and it is quite natural they should; but I can assure them and I are old and tried friends, and I will intrude on them but a few minutes longer. I am anxious to say the words in private to your son, my worthy soul, and lest his naturally prudent nature should induce him to decline, I have come to you to obtain your maternal persuasions in my favor. I will step to the door and wait, but I'm sure he will listen and obey the words of a tender mother."

Humming an air as he went, Mr. Sweet walked out, after bowing politely to the company, and waited with the utmost patience for some ten minutes at the door. At the end of that period the gentleman waited for made his appearance, looking sour, suspicious and discontented. Mr. Sweet instantly took his arm and led him out in his pleasant way.

"Dear old fellow! I knew you would come—in fact, I was perfectly sure of it. About fifty yards from this place there is a clump of birch trees, overhanging a hedge, a great place where nobody ever comes. Do you know it?"

A sulky nod was the answer.

"Very well. Have the goodness to precede me there—people might say something if they saw us go together. I have a very interesting little story to tell you, which will not bear more than one listener, and that dark spot is just the place to tell it in. Go on!"

The man paused for one moment and looked at him in mingled suspicion and fear; but Mr. Sweet was pointing steadily out. And, muttering in his peculiar, growling tones, like those of a beaten cur, he slunk away in the direction indicated. The distance was short; he made his way through the crowd and soon reached the spot, a gloomy place with white birches, casting long cool shadows over the hot grass, in an obscure corner of the grounds where nobody came. There was an old stump of a tree, rotting under the fragrant hawthorn hedge; the man sat down on it, took a pipe out of his pocket, lit it, and began to smoke. As he took the first whiff, something glinted behind him in the sun, and raising his sullen eyes, they rested on the smiling visage of Mr. Sweet.

"Ah, that's right!" that gentleman began in his lively way; "make yourself perfectly comfortable, my dear Black—your name is Black, is it not—Peter Black, eh?"

Mr. Black nodded, and smoked away like a volcano.

"Mine's Sweet—Sylvester Sweet, solicitor at law, and agent and steward of the estates of Lady Agnes Shirley, of Castle Cliffe. And now that we mutually know each other, I am sure you will be pleased to have me proceed to business at once."

There was a rustic stile in the hawthorn hedge quite close to where Mr. Black sat. Mr. Sweet took a seat upon it, and looked down on him, smiling all over.

"Perhaps you're surprised, my dear Mr. Black, that I should know you as if you were my brother, and you may be still further surprised when you hear that it was solely and exclusively on your account that I have come to these races. I am not a betting man; I haven't the slightest interest in any of these horses; I don't care a snap who wins or who loses, and I detest crowds; but I wouldn't have stayed away from these races for a thousand pounds! And all, my dear fellow," said Mr. Sweet, jingling his watch-seals till they seemed laughing in chorus, "all because I knew you were to be here."

Mr. Black, smoking away in grim silence, and looking stolidly before him, might have been deaf or dumb for all the interest or curiosity he manifested.

"You appear indifferent, my good Black; but I think I will manage to interest you yet before we part. I have the most charming little story to relate, and I must go back—let me see—eleven years."

Mr. Black gave the slightest perceptible start, but still he neither looked up nor spoke.

"Some fifteen miles north of London," said Mr. Sweet, playing away with his watch-seals, "there is a dirty little village called Worral, and in this village there lived, eleven years ago, a man named Jack Wildman, better known to his pot-house companions by the sobriquet of 'Black Jack.'"

Mr. Peter Black jumped as if he had been shot, and the pipe dropped from his mouth, and was shivered into atoms at his feet.

"What is it? Been stung by a wasp or a hornet?" inquired Mr. Sweet, kindly. "Those horrible little insects are in swarms around here; but sit down, my good Black; sit down, and take another pipe—got none? Well, never mind. This Black Jack I was telling you of was a mason by trade, earning good wages, and living very comfortably with a wife and one child, a little girl; and I think her name was Barbara. Do sit down, Mr. Black; and don't look at me in that uncomfortably steadfast way—it's not polite to stare, you know!"

Mr. Black crouched back in his seat; but his hands were clenched and his face was livid.

"This man, as I told you, was getting good wages, and was doing well; but he was one of those discontented, ungrateful curs, who, like a spaniel, required to be whipped and kicked to be made to keep his place. He got dissatisfied; he went among his fellow-laborers, and stirred up a feeling of mutinous revolt. There was a strike, and to their great amazement and disgust, their masters took them at their word, hired other workmen, and told the cross-grained dogs to beg or starve, just as they pleased. They grew furious, houses were set on fire, the new workmen were waylaid and beaten, works were demolished, and no end of damage done. But it did not last long; the law has a long arm and a strong hand, and it reached the disaffected stone-masons of Worral. A lot of them were taken one night after having set a house on fire, and beaten an inoffensive man to death; and three months after, the whole villainous gang were transported for life to New South Wales. Allow me to give you a cigar, my dear Black; I am sure you can't think better, and I can talk better smoking."

There was a strong club, with an iron head, that some one had dropped, lying near Mr. Black picked it up, and sprung to his feet, with a furious face. The motion was quick; but his companion had made a quicker one; he had thrust his hand into his breast pocket, and drawn out something that clicked sharply.

"Dear old boy, keep cool! No good ever comes of acting on impulse, and this is a hair-trigger! Sit down—do—and throw that club over the hedge, or I'll blow your brains out as I would a mad dog!"

Mr. Sweet's voice was as soft as the notes of an Aeolian harp, and his smile was perfectly serene. But his pistol was within five inches of Mr. Black's countenance; and snarling like a baffled tiger, he did throw the club over the hedge, and slunk back with a face so distorted by fear and fury, that it was scarcely human.

"Dear boy, if you would only be sensible and keep quiet like that; but you are so impulsive! Mr. Wildman was transported, and is probably founding a flourishing colony in that delightful land, at this present moment, for nobody ever heard of him again. But some five months ago, there arrived in London, from some unknown quarter, a gentleman by the name of Black—Peter Black, who was so charmingly got up with the aid of a wig, false whiskers and mustaches, and a suit of sailor's clothes, that his own dear mother couldn't have known him. In fact, that venerable lady didn't know him at all, when after a month's diligent search and inquiry, he found her out, and paid her an unexpected visit; but it was a delightful meeting. Don't ask me to describe it; no known words in the English language could do justice to a mother's feelings on meeting a lost son—and such a son! Ah, dear me!" said Mr. Sweet, taking his cigar between his finger and thumb, and looking down at it with a pensive sigh.

Mr. Peter Black, crouching down between the trunks of the trees, and glaring with eyes like those of a furious bulldog about to spring, did not seem exactly the sort of son for any mother to swoon with delight at seeing; but then, tastes differ. Mr. Sweet knocked the ashes daintily off the end of his cigar, replaced it between his lips, looked brightly down on the glaring eyes, and went on.

"Mr. Peter Black, when the first transports of meeting were over, found that the relief of the late transported Mr. Wildman had departed—let us hope to a better land—and that his mother had adopted Miss Barbara, then a charming young lady of eleven, and the most popular little tight-rope dancer in London. Miss Barbara was introduced to Mr. Black, informed he was her father, just returned after a long cruise, and no end of shipwrecks, and through her influence, a place was procured for him as ticket-porter in the theater. It was a wandering affair that same theater, and Mr. Black and his charming daughter and mother went roving with it over the country, and finally came to it to the Cliftonlea races. Sly old fox! how you sit there drinking in every word—do let me prevail on you to light this cigar."

He threw a fragrant Havana as he spoke from his cigar-case; but the sly old fox let it roll on the grass at his feet, and never took his savage eyes off the sunny face of the lawyer.

His face was so frightfully pale, that the unearthly glare and the mat of coarse black hair, made it look by contrast quite dreadful.

"You won't have it—well, no matter! How do you like my story?"

"You devil," said Mr. Black, speaking for the first time and in a horrible voice, "where did you learn my story?"

"Your story, eh? I thought you would find it interesting. No matter where I learned it, I know you, Mr. Peter Black, as pat as my prayers, and I intend to use that knowledge, you may take your oath! You are as much my slave as if I bought you in the Southern States of America for so many hundred dollars; as much my dog as if I had you chained and kennelled in my yard! Don't stir, you returned transport, or I'll shoot you where you stand."

With the ferocious eyes blazing, and the tiger-jaws snarling, Mr. Black crawled in spirit in the dust at the feet of the calm-voiced, yellow-haired lawyer.

"And now, Mr. Black, you understand why I brought you here to tell you this little story; and as you've listened to it with exemplary patience, you may listen now to the sequel. The first thing you are to do is, to quit this roving theater, you, and the dear old lady, and the pretty little tight-rope dancer. You can remain with them to-day, but to-night you will go to the Cliffe Arms, the three of you, and remain there until I give you leave to quit. Have you money enough to pay for lodgings there a week?"

Mr. Black uttered some guttural sounds by way of reply, but they were so choked in his throat with rage and terror that they were undistinguishable.

Mr. Sweet jumped down and patted him on the shoulder with a good-natured laugh.

"Speak out, old fellow! Yes or no."

"Yes."

"You won't go secretly, you know. Tell the proprietor of the affair that you like this place, and that you are going to settle down and take to fishing or farming; that you don't like this vagabond kind of life for your little girl and so on. Go to the Cliffe Arms to-night. You'll have no trouble in getting quarters there, and you and your delightful family will stay till I see fit to visit you again. You will do this, my dear boy—won't you?"

"You know I must!" said the man, with a flendish scowl, and his fingers convulsively working, as if he would have liked to spring on the pleasant lawyer and tear him limb from limb.

"Oh, yes, I know it!" said Mr. Sweet, laughing; "and I know, too, that if you should attempt to play any tricks on me, that I will have you swinging by the neck from the Old Bailey six months after. But you needn't be afraid. I don't mean to do you any harm. On the contrary, if you only follow my directions, you will find me the best friend you ever had. Now go."

Mr. Black rose up, and turned away, but before he had gone two yards he was back again.

"What do you want? What does all this mean?" he asked, in a husky whisper.

"Never you mind that, but take yourself off. I'm done with you for the present. Time tells everything, and time will tell what I want with you. Off with you!"

Mr. Black turned again, and this time walked steadily out of sight; and when he was entirely gone, Mr. Sweet broke into a musical laugh, threw his smoked-out cigar over the hedge, thrust his hands in his pockets, and went away whistling:

"My love is but a lassie yet."

But if the steward and agent of Lady Agnes Shirley had given the father of the Infant Venus a most pleasant surprise, there was another surprise in reserve for himself—whether pleasant or not, is an unanswerable question. He was making his way through the crowd, lifting his hat and nodding and smiling right and left, when a hearty slap on the shoulder from behind made him turn quickly; as an equally hearty voice exclaimed:

"Sweet, old fellow, how goes it?"

A tall gentleman, seemingly about thirty, with an unmistakably military air about him, although dressed in civilian costume, stood before him. Something in the peculiarly erect, upright carriage, in the laughing blue eyes, in the fair, curly hair and characteristic features, were familiar; but the thick soldier's mustache and sunburned skin puzzled him. Only for a moment, though; the next he had started back, with an exclamation of:

"Lieutenant Shirley!"

"Colonel Shirley, if you please. Do you suppose I have served twelve years in India for nothing—do you? Don't look so blanched, man. I am not a ghost, but the same scapegrace you used to lend money to long since. Give me your hand, and I'll show you."

Mr. Sweet held out his hand, and received such a bear's grip from the Indian officer that tears of pain started into his eyes.

"Thank you, colonel; that will do," said the lawyer, wincing, but in an overjoyed tone all the same. "Who could have looked for such an unexpected pleasure! When did you arrive?"

"I got to Southampton last night, and started for here the first thing. How are all our people? I haven't met any one I know, save yourself; but they told me in Cliftonlea Lady Agnes was here."

"So she is. Come along, and I'll show you where."

With a face radiant with delight and surprise, Mr. Sweet led the way, and Colonel Shirley followed. Many of the faces that passed were familiar, Sir Roland's among the rest; but the Indian officer, hurrying on, stopped to speak to no one. The file of carriages soon came in sight. Mr. Sweet pointed out the pony phaeton; and his companion, the next instant, was measuring off the road toward it in great strides. Lady Agnes, with Tom beside her, was just giving languid directions about driving home, when a handsome face, bronzed and mustached, was looking smilingly down on her, a hand being held out, and a well-known voice exclaiming:

"Mother, I have come home again!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 289.)

**TIGER DICK.**

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## RED ROB.

### The Boy Road-Agent.

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "BOWIE-KNIFE BEN," "OLD HURRICANE," "HAWKEYE HARRY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

### CHAPTER XIV.

A VISIT TO THE CONEJOS SALOON.

WE now go back to the friends we left encamped on the plain near Conejos. The night wore away without any further demonstrations on the part of the Indians.

The mysterious rangers who had saved the train did not come back.

By daylight the train was in motion, and a few hours' drive brought them to the village. Dakota Dan, who was still with them, had preceded them to the town, and had selected a good camping-ground, where water and pasture were convenient for the animals.

The camp and its occupants at once became the center of attraction to the citizens of the little village. They visited the emigrants daily, and the young folks, of whom there were several dark-eyed maidens and dashing youths, soon became acquainted with the young people from the East.

Conejos was a secluded little place, nestled at the foot of the mountain, and almost out of reach of communication with other parts of the world, except what it had by a weekly mail running from there south.

A wealthy Spaniard had first settled there, around whose imposing *casa* he had erected a number of adobe buildings for his army of peons; but the man dying, the *ranch* went to wreck and ruin, and strangers finally came in and repaired it, and added other buildings, until it now numbered some thirty dwellings and two hundred souls.

The present population was chiefly Spanish-Mexicans, with a goodly number of Americans and a sprinkling of foreigners. Some of these, especially the Americans, were engaged in the cattle-trade, some in mining, some in hunting, while a large per cent. followed no avocation at all, unless it was to drink, fight and gamble—a curse entailed upon nearly every South-western town and village.

Situated, as Conejos was, away from the seat of legal restraint, it naturally became a little worse in the way of lawless characters than most places of its size. If the town did not afford sufficient business for the outlaws and gamblers, they would visit other settlements for victims, but hide themselves at Conejos.

I will here say that our emigrant friends were entirely out of the course they had intended to pursue in getting into the San Juan valley. The mistake had been made through the want of a guide, and a knowledge of the topography of the country. This, then, accounted for their being at Conejos.

Dakota Dan warned them as to the character of the town; although the ranger himself was a stranger there, he yet knew of its bad reputation.

The better class of the population were in constant fear and dread of the mountain banditti; albeit a good many around the village were termed outlaws. But then there are grades of robbers and outlaws the same as there are grades of society. One was that class to which belonged those daring, fearless fellows, whose homes were in the mountain fastnesses; the other, those cowardly desperadoes that murder before they steal.

Red Rob, the Boy Road-Agent, and his band, had been keeping up a general excitement for a hundred miles around, and the Conejosites were in hourly expectation of a visit from this young outlaw.

On the evening of the second day of our friends' sojourn, Dakota Dan approached Major St. Kenelm and asked:

"Look 'e here, major, wouldn't you like to see life in Conejos by gaslight?"

"Well really, Dan, the thought had not occurred to my mind before; but if you think we won't get into trouble with those desperadoes, I wouldn't mind going with you."

"All we've got to do, major, is to keep mum. But then you'd better fill yer pockets with revolvers, fur fear some one might stumble against you. To have the grit to shoot a man down here in Mexico for a trifling thing, carries greater weight than shootin' in defense of one's life. The latter is a necessity; the former a spirit of bravado that shows a recklessness of what follows—that you shoot fur the fun of it."

Like all such places, Conejos had a saloon, which sported the euphonious name of the "Swill-Pail." To this was attached all the conveniences required by men who wished to spend their time and money at cards, dice, or any other game they preferred. Toward this saloon and gambling den Dakota Dan led the way.

The old ranger was known in Conejos only by hearsay; and he had made it a point to keep his identity from them; for, if known to the hunters and rangers that made the "Swill-Pail" a favorite resort, it would be expected of him that he mingle with them in their spree.

Reaching the saloon, the two opened the door and strode boldly in. The clink of glasses, high words, ribald oaths, shuffling cards, rattling dice, the fumes of tobacco-smoke and liquor greeted their senses as they entered.

The house was full of men



"Woof!" he suddenly exclaimed, shaking himself like a huge bear. "I'm just sp'illin' for a fight, and I'll face anybody or everybody here, I don't keer a cuss which. Come, trot out some of yer big crowin' cocks, if they want to bounce spurs with this ole chicken, Missouri Moll, the King of the Stage."

No one responded to his urgent request, but hearing a man talking rather loud at the other end of the saloon, he waited up to him and said:

"See here, Manuel Chicaloo, do you know what you are sayin'? Are you throwin' out insinuations against Missouri Moll?"

"I wasn't sayin' anything 'bout you, Missouri; I wasn't even thinkin' of you."

"Oh, ho, there! the devil you say!" roared the bully; "then I'm beneath your notice, am I? See here, Chicaloo, you've got to fight me for that insult. You shan't run over—"

"You misunderstood me, Missouri, you did indeed, I said—"

"Oh! then I'm a fool, am I? Well, by thunder, I won't take that," and the much-injured Missouri Moll "squared" off and knocked Manuel Chicaloo down.

At this same instant a shout, a pistol-shot and a groan came from the opposite end of the hall, and drew the attention of our friends to that direction.

A brief scuffle ensued, during which a number of lamps and tables were overturned upon the floor, which was of the solid ground.

"That!" roared Missouri Moll, as if half provoked, "I wanted you that. It beats the ole devil that I've got to be everywhere to keep peace among this quarrelin' pack."

The desperado moved toward the opposite end of the hall, and the crowd swayed after him.

For while a Babel-like murmur filled the room, then the hoarse voice of the stage-driver was heard to shout:

"Clear the way, there, ye varmint!"

The crowd at once parted, and four men, carrying the lifeless body of a man, moved down the hall and out at the door. And a thread of blood stretched the full length of the building out into the darkness.

Major St. Kenelm shuddered, and a vague horror filled his breast.

"That poor feller war dead," whispered Dakota Dan. "He staked his life at cards, and lost all."

"My God, Dan! if this is life in New Mexico, I want none of it," said St. Kenelm; "Mississippi towns are nothing compared with Conejos."

"Oh, this is all right, major," responded the old ranger, sarcastically; "this is a spot of our republican government—our glorious star-spangled American eagle. Judicious legislation brought about this millennium. Give Congress time and it will annex ole Mexico and Purgatory next. Humph! this thing of a hen havin' more chicks than she can cover, I don't believe in. What's Congress and the law-makers know 'bout that bein' killed? What does the local authorities keer? Ah, major! I love my country—have fit and died for it, but I don't like some things 'bout her internal machinery—the way her laws are executed. That's the Utah poligamists—a mere handful—that for years have defied our laws, our judges and our cannon. And then, just think of that insane Injin policy! Oh, Lord! it makes my very hair blush for man's ignorance of the Injin."

"I am not an advocate of the humanitarian Indian policy, Dan, for the reason it is not a success," replied St. Kenelm. "I am inclined to think that a few such men as you, well armed and equipped, would do more toward keeping the Indians under subjection than all the Quakers in America."

"That, major!" exclaimed Dan, bringing his bony palm down upon his companion's knee. "You have hit it plumb-center!"

By this time the house had been cleared of all evidences of the late murder, and general "order" restored.

The gamblers had all resumed their seats at the tables, and business went on as before.

Missouri Moll, with an air of relief, began his pacing up and down the hall, imploring any one to become a victim to his pugilistic wrath.

Several times his savage eyes rested upon our friends, but no direct challenge was given them.

"Who is that desperado, Dan?" asked Major St. Kenelm.

"He's a stage-driver they call Missouri Moll," replied the old ranger. "He drives from Conejos to somewhere south and back, once a week. He's a great bully, and every one of them kitters hangin' round him would kiss his feet, that'd kick 'em the next moment. If he'd whip every man here, they'd fight for him the next minute because he's Missouri Moll, the King of the Stage—Hullo there!"

At this juncture the door was opened and a new-comer entered the room. He was a young man—in fact a mere boy, whose timid, unsophisticated looks told that he was entirely out of his place. The boy had a clear dark eye, it is true, and was really "good-looking," but his ill-fitting suit of dark gray, his awkward movements, and his bashful, half-frightened looks, told that he was from the "rural districts" of the States. He had doubtless become fired with the spirit of Western life, had run away from home, and had called in at the "Swill Pail" to make observations.

Dan and St. Kenelm saw that he was a stranger, and for a moment he became a focus upon which all eyes were centered. And at length Missouri Moll espied him, and smacking his lips in high gusto, exclaimed:

"A young one—a tender morsel for my supper," and prancing up to the boy, he slapped him upon the shoulder and continued: "How are you, sonny? What's your name? Whar did ye come from? Tired, ar'n't you? A little somethin' to take will help you, so come right up, bub, and take yer first drink with gallant Missouri Moll, King of the Stage, of whom you've heard, I dare say—read about in yer Sunday-school books."

"I never drink, sir, thank you," replied the youth, half terrified.

"You've no business in here, then," replied the bully.

"I know it; but I came in through mistake."

"Yes, yes, youngster; I made that mistake, too, so come up and drink—ye must."

"No, I will not," the boy replied, firmly.

"But you shall, sir," the driver said, fiercely; "I'll be teetotally cussed if I don't pour it down your throat. I'll hold your nose, my babe, and pour it right down, and you'll thank me for it, some day. I say, ole Slop-tub, behind the bar, fill me up a mug of hot liquor. This boy must drink."

"Major," said Dakota Dan, in a low, solemn tone, "that boy shan't be imposed upon. Before that liquor goes down his throat, either that desperado or Dakota Dan will be dead. If I fail, major, I hope you'll get through the mountains safe."

Before St. Kenelm could reply, the old ran-

ger rose, and with a deadly fire in his steel-gray eyes, advanced to the side of the trembling boy.

## CHAPTER XV.

## RED ROB'S RAID.

MISSOURI MOLL soon returned with the liquor.

"Here, boy," he said, "drink this down and be a man."

"See here, ole boss," said Dakota Dan, interposing, "if this boy wants to drink, I've nothin' to say, but if he don't want to, you shan't force it onto him."

"The roarin' demon!" exclaimed the bully, in apparent astonishment, at the same time tossing glass, liquor and all over his shoulder behind him, regardless of whom they struck, "what's this? A man, or a mummy? What little, ole, dried-up institution are you that dares to put in a lip whar Missouri Moll, the King of the Stage, reigns supreme? Why, man, I shall grind, pulverize to dust and sprinkle over this floor your withered carcass."

"I don't know anything 'bout your powers to grind up folks," responded Dan, coolly, "but I'm determined you shan't carry out your threat with that boy."

"Durned if I don't show you, ole dry-bones," roared the bully; "see here, ole Dutch oven, send over another mug of 'strangulation'."

The last words were directed to the bartender's wife, who at once filled the bar, when a dozen eager hands flew to the bar to bear the glass to their master, Missouri Moll.

As soon as the glass was placed in the stage-driver's hands, the bully advanced toward the shrinking youth and reached out and attempted to seize his nose between his forefinger and thumb. But at the same instant the form of Dakota Dan straightened up and his bony fist was planted directly between the eyes of Missouri Moll. The driver dropped like a log to the floor, spilling the liquor as he went down. But with a roar like that of a mad bull, he sprung to his feet and squared off, tore open his collar, shoved up his sleeves and was then ready to exterminate the old ranger.

The boy burst into a peal of laughter.

"The Lord's eternal!" hissed the desperado, "I'll make you squeak outen t'other side of your mouth. I'll exterminate both of you—"

"Go in, King Molly, I'll back you," cried Manuel Chicaloo, the very individual whom the desperado had knocked down a few minutes before; "I'll tend to that boy—I'll learn him how to insult the King of the Stage—I'll learn him manners, the insignificant little son of—"

The villain's low, abusive words were here cut short by the youth's fist, which, quicker than thought, was planted on the wretch's mouth, knocking him back against the bar with terrible violence.

The youth's blow proved the signal for a general attack upon himself and Dakota Dan.

And, seeing the danger of his friend and the boy, St. Kenelm, springing forward, became involved in the fight.

High above the din of the conflict suddenly arose the piercing scream of a whistle. It is used from the midst of the crowd. It caused an involuntary hush in the confusion.

The next moment a yell was heard outside. The tramping of hooved feet was heard upon the street. The sounds approached. The door was burst suddenly open, and, to the horror of all, a masked horseman galloped into the saloon.

In his hand he held a cocked revolver. He was immediately followed by another and still another, until a dozen mounted and masked horsemen were in the room.

Terror swayed the crowd.

"Red Rob! Red Rob, the Boy Road-Agent, is upon us!" burst from the lips of one.

It was enough. A panic seized the crowd, and a general confused rush was made for the door and the windows. The road-agents opened fire upon the confused mass. In a few moments the saloon was deserted by all save the outlaws and three dead men.

Dakota Dan, St. Kenelm and the boy were also gone.

A yell that fairly shook the building burst from the lips of the robbers as they ranged their animals around in front the bar, and called lustily for "drinks."

But no one answered their summons.

Finally one of the party dismounted and went behind the bar to wait on the others. To his surprise he found the bartender and his wife there, curled up under a sleeping-bunk.

The fat couple were routed out, and by strong argument in the shape of a cocked revolver, were persuaded to set out the drinks and cigars until all were satisfied. Then one of the robbers demanded:

"What's the bill?"

The quaking, terrified German looked wild.

"What's the bill, I ask?"

"Mine Gott, nodings!" gasped the man, "if you leave here just quick. Mine frow is almost to death scared, and trembles in her body moomch fast."

"That's not the question; what do we owe you?" demanded the masked road-agent.

"Two dollars pay for all, but I no charge you if you go fast hurry away."

Despite his remonstrances, the outlaw paid the bill, and without further annoyance rode out of the saloon, and galloped away toward the mountains.

By this time, however, Conejos was wild with excitement. The name of Red Rob was upon every lip. But in the midst of all, no one thought of attempting the capture of the young outlaw. Self-defense was the only thought that filled the minds of the terrified populace, for all they had no need of fear. They possessed nothing that the outlaws wanted—nothing that they could make away with, and joy followed the brief reign of terror, when it had become known that the road-agents, on leaving the saloon, had taken their departure from the village.

The list of casualties at the saloon were four men killed—including the one shot at the gambling-table—and several wounded. Among the latter was Missouri Moll. He had received a wound in the fight with Dakota Dan and the boy that was likely to lay him up for several weeks, as in fact it did.

Dan and St. Kenelm escaped with but few bruises; but it left their minds in a state of fear. They were afraid that their participation in the saloon fight would involve them in future trouble; and the fact of their being at the saloon at all would be instrumental in causing the withdrawal of the friendship of the better class of the citizens.

"But we've got to watch 'em, major," Dan said, as they wended their way back toward camp; "they're a set of devils, and that's no tellin' which side you're fightin' on. Nor those friends you're strikin'." Oh, Lor! if I'd just had ole Patience, my mare, and Humility, my dog, that in that saloon, the Triangle'd been complete, and gracious man! no tellin' what'd 'a happened."

"I am really sorry that we got into any trouble at all, Dan," said St. Kenelm.

"So am I, major; and I reckon I'm to

blame fur it all; but I couldn't help it. If that's anything on earth that I'll fight fur, it's for women and children, for I war a chile on't, and my ole mother war a woman. When that boy came in thar, lookin' innocent-like, I couldn't stand and see that 'larnal big bully impose on him. But, mortal p'son, major, a volkner of strength and lightosity slumbered in that boy. Ole Patience, my mare, couldn't kick harder'n he struck that are Mexican; and I never seed Humility, my dog, flip around spryer than he did."

"Do you know how he came out of the fight?" asked the major.

"Never seed him arter we closed in. I hope he got through safe, though; for I tell ye, major, I took to that boy as natural like as water runs down hill. He's nobody's greeny, I'll bet you. I think all his rural appearances war put on. But be that as it may, whenever we meet him ag'in, we'll meet a good, brave friend."

"Yes, we assumed the risk of our lives for him," replied his companion; "but, Dan, it appears that one of Red Rob's men was in the saloon at the time we were."

"Even so, major; and the moment the fight begun, he called his pals by that ear-splitting whistle. Snakes of Jee-rusalem! I thought judgment had come when I seed the reckless devils come a-gallopin' right into the saloon and go to shootin' and bangin' right and left, regardless of friends or foes. I war just sailin' in handsonely on Missouri Moll, churmin' his physegonomy in splendid style, when they came in. But that boy, major—did you notice him?—did ye see his eyes? Major, I, Daniel Rackback, do firmly, positively and honestly believe that that very identical boy war Red Rob!"

"Indeed! I have thought so myself, Dan. Probably we'll find out soon. He may give our camp a call before he leaves the country," replied St. Kenelm, uneasily.

At this juncture they reached camp, and found that their friends were entirely ignorant of Red Rob's raid upon Conejos.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## AUNT SHADY'S TROUBLES.

GREAT excitement prevailed in Conejos on the morning following Red Rob's raid upon the saloon. Of three men that had been killed, not one had come to his death by a bullet. In every case, knives had been the fatal weapons. Several, however, had been wounded by the hoofs of the robbers' horses that thundered so suddenly in upon them. But the most startling of all were the placards posted on every road converging at Conejos, and upon which was written this notice:

"Notice—any one injuring a hair of the heads of the old man and his friend who visited the 'Swill Pail' last night, will be shot without trial or jury. An responsible for all that occurred in the fight there last night, and to meet the injured look for satisfaction."

This seemed to renew the fear and excitement of the populace. All even feared to question each other as to the old man and friend referred to. They knew how fruitless had been the efforts of the military to capture this band of daring robbers, and so the very name of Red Rob was sufficient to impel obedience to the wishes of the young road-agent. It soon leaked out, however, that the "old man" referred to was the redoubtable Dakota Dan, the ranger; and "his friend," Major St. Kenelm. This discovery threw some suspicions around the emigrant train—in fact, led to the belief that it, or some of its members at least, were in some manner connected with the outlaws.

But this was all set aside in the minds of the law-abiding people, what few there were in Conejos, by Dakota Dan, who went boldly into the village and made known the truth of the whole affair.

This course proved a masterpiece of policy, for it at once drew either the respect or fear of the citizens over to the emigrants. Dakota Dan was lionized by those who had been his enemies, but the old ranger shook his head dubiously. He would not be caught in a trap by the flattery of such men as he had seen in the Conejos saloon.

The boy for whom he and St. Kenelm had fought could not be found, and the ranger now became satisfied that he was Red Rob.

The days wore as quietly away as could be expected, and the time for our friends to resume their journey drew near. Before their departure, however, an entertainment was to be given by the citizens of Conejos in honor of their brief sojourn. This was to be a *baile* (a ball) or platform dance in the open air, the chief amusement of the Mexican belles and beaux. It was not to be a *fandango*, a name which many writers, through ignorance, associate with all Mexican dances, but a ball of different dances—the American cotillon, the Mexican cotillon and round dances.

Through maidenly curiosity, Octavia St. Kenelm and Maggie Boswell were both anxious to attend the ball, but their friends held the propriety of their going under careful consideration. They grew very uneasy as the decision would be in the negative; and Octavia finally resolved to appeal to Aunt Shady and have her exert her influence upon her brother Al.

She found the old negress seated alone, some little distance from camp, weeping.

"Why, Aunt Shady, what in the world is the matter with you?" asked the maiden, seeing the tears chasing each other down her sable cheeks.

"Oh, honey, dear!" sobbed the old woman, "I'm most awful sorry in my ole heart."

"What has given you trouble and sorrow, Aunt Shady?"

"Oh, Lor! bless you, honey. I war just thinkin' 'bout ole Kentucky shore, and my little pickaninny—my little boy dat—"

"Your little boy? Why, Auntie, I never knew you were married."

"In course I was, chile; but my ole man he died, and my little Henry Clay, he war put up on de auction-block one day and sold, and den I nebber sees him no more. He war only five years ole when he war sole, Octaby; and 'bout de same time your ole father bought me. Dat Henry Clay chile war de sweetest, darlinest little feller dat you ebber see. He's ole mudder's heart war proud ob de little toad. He war jib as smart as a cricket. But oh, Octaby, when ole massa told me dat he sell my little Henry Clay, ebberthyring turn black, den green, and I tried to hide my little chile in my heart; but I couldn't, and when he war taken away, it seemed I would die dead. De little feller looked back, held up his hands and cried, and called for his ole mudder; but no one but me and God, honey, heard dem baby cries. And so he war taken away and I war left alone. But den when your father bought me, I war n't so lonesome, for den I hab my little Octaby to love. But now comes mudder sorry—an awful secret, honey."

"An awful secret, Auntie! Goodness! I thought you were always the happiest old woman on earth—without troubles or cares, and

now here you are with one of those mysterious things called secrets."

"Yes, honey; and it all concerns yoahself," and Aunt Shady burst into a flood of tears that almost melted Octavia's heart with pity.

Dropping on her knees at the old woman's feet with tears in her dark eyes, the maiden asked:

"Is the secret of which you speak concerning me, Auntie?"

"Yes, chile, all concernin' you. But I can't tell it to you yet, Octaby. I'll tell all 'bout it some day. I promised your ole father and b'loved ole Massa St. Kenelm—not dat one what sole my little Henry Clay—when he went away dat—"

"Went away?" exclaimed Octavia; "is my father not dead?"

"Don't people go away when dey die, honey? My ole man is 'way up in heaben wid de Lor', and dar's whar dis ole soul 'spects to go some day. But when ole massa went away, as I war gwine to say, he said: 'Shady, if I—if sumthin' don't happen to Octaby inside of twelve years, you can tell her the secret of her life—that is, if you are living—twelve years from dis very day and not before.' I promised him all dat."

And does brother Al not know the secret of which you speak?" asked Octavia.

"No chile, he know nuffin' 'bout it. When he know de whole thing, I know it'll make his heart sad. Oh, dear!"

"You'll tell me what it is, won't you, Auntie?" Octavia asked, looking up into the old woman's face.

"Not yet, chile; de twelve years will not be out yet fur four long weeks; den I tell it all, though it break my ole heart, and I 'spects it will break my poor, darling Octaby's heart and Massa Al's too. But I promised de ole massa I'd do it, and de good angel of my soul recorded my words on de big book in heaben."

For a moment both the old woman and her young mistress were silent—plunged deep in the labyrinth of thought. Finally the negress continued:

"And den dar am anudder trouble in my heart, Octaby."

"Another trouble?" repeated Octavia, in painful surprise; "you are the embodiment of secrets and troubles, Auntie. I wish I could relieve you of some of them."

"Law-sakes-alive! Bless your soul, honey, you're jib speakin' right outen your heart now, Octaby. Now tell me, chile, ar'n't you in love?"

"Why, what a question, Aunt Shady. Is that what troubles you?"

"Hain't dat enuff to? Ebber since dat day dat you met dat young ranger boy, on de road to Conejos, you've been kind a thoughtful and dreamy-like. I know you love dat feller you talk 'bout, now don't you?"

Octavia laughed a clear, musical laugh. Aunt Shady, too, in that hearty, good-natured way of hers, adding, with a knowing shake of the head:

"You can't fool your ole Auntie, chile. She young-one too—"

"And loved some one, I dare say," put in the maiden.

"No, no, ebbery young squirt dat come along, fur, chile, your ole Auntie used to be as gay a colahed gal as dar war in all Kentucky. And dar war a dozen—oh, law-sakes yes; a hundred young colahed chaps tryin' to shine round your Auntie, but I jist up and sack dem ebbery last one. But dar war one, Sam Johnson, a gay young nigger, dat kept a-comin' and a-comin' still, and at las' yer Aunt Shady got her dander up and she jib took dat nigger by de collar and sent him a-bouncin'. Den I married one ob massa's niggers dat war a good man, and loved de Lor'. And dat's jist de way I'd do wid dat young ranger boy, chile, if I war you."

"I may never see him again, Auntie," replied Octavia, with a rueful smile. "Moreover, I don't know whether he wants to marry, or loves de—"

"Oh, pshaw! you don't understand what I say," interrupted the negress.

"Well, it don't make any difference. The young man will not know where to find me when we get over the mountains."

"Law-sakes-alive! You can't hide from a feller dat's lovin' you. Love in a man has an instinct dat's like de nose ob a bloodhound. Why, didn't I hide in de ole dry well on't when Sam Johnson war a-comin'; and didn't he walk right slap-dab up to de well and look down and see me and laff? Den I fired up and says I: 'Sam Johnson, whar fur you come here?' and he said he war dry, and went dar to get a drink, but, tut! it wa'n't so, honey."

—and Aunt Shady gave her head a disdainful toss—"for it wa'n't no well at all—nebber had playin'—a deep hole de big boys had dug playin' 'hunt gold."

"Auntie you speak as though the ranger loved me. Who knows that he has ever given me a second thought since we parted?"

"Deed, dat's who. No youngster wid a spark of true manhood in his bosom could see you and not fall in lub wid you, honey."

"You are very flattering in your compliments, Auntie," said the maiden.

"Well, honest-bright, Octaby, don't you lub dat boy?"

"Aunt Shady," said Octavia, seriously, "the image of that young man is constantly before me when I am asleep and awake. Sometimes I find myself looking around in hopes of seeing him. I am always expecting something, I do not know what; and now, if this is love, then I love that young ranger and am not ashamed to—"

"Yes, dat's lub—de very fust symptoms ob de disease, chile. Your ole Auntie knows how it act on de constituting. Dar am always sumthin' wanted, but no tellin' what, when one's in lub."

"Changing the subject, Auntie, won't you prevail on brother Al to take me to the ball to-night? I just want to see how the young folks in this miserable country appear."

"I expected dat; but den I war young on't, too, and I tells you, Octaby, dar wa'n't a colahed gal in all Kentucky dat could beat your Auntie at a colahed hoe-down, as we used to call 'em, dem days. I could jist beat de world dancin' juba, or cuttin' de pigeon-wing, and 'spects I could skip 'round right lively yet. Yes, I likes to see one be young when dey can. Massa Al will let you go—said he would go wid you and Miss Boswell, but he told me not to tell you, so I won't, honey," and the old woman went off into a merry outburst of laughter.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 266.)

BETTER a thousandfold sacrifice elegance than fervor; better crucify refined taste than quench holy passion; better have the outward forms of devotion imperfect and martistic than lose the spirit which alone gives them value; better that music should be discordant than soulless; the prayers broken and rugged than cold and undevout; the altar bare and unattractive than the fire that ought to burn on it extinguished, the temple rude and unsightly than the God absent.



## BEAUTIFUL MAY.

BY FRANK W. COTTON.

The night was dark—'twas near night's noon,  
And my spirit had darkened amid the gloom,  
When a gleam of light from the distant moon  
Pierced through the clouds and illumined the room.

And a thought—'twas as sweet as the happiest dream  
Flashed into my soul, with the moon's bright gleam,  
Of beautiful May, beautiful May!  
My mind could not dwell on a sweeter theme,  
Beautiful, beautiful May!

I have tossed away a pretty bouquet  
Of violets meek and peonies vain,  
Or pond lilies fair and red roses gay,  
And one that I'll take in my hand again—  
A white rose, as pure as a drop of dew.  
Let me call it May: I will cling to you,  
Beautiful May, beautiful May!

Even though thy sharp thorns pierce my fingers through,  
Beautiful, beautiful May!  
A beautiful song thrills my spirit through,  
Oh, where have I heard that sweet song before?  
I have not heard it; it is some thing new.  
Y't a sweet suggestion it seems to pour  
On my soul, of something so sweet, so dear,  
That it surely must be—yes, now I hear,  
The beautiful May! beautiful May!  
May is like the song that can summon a tear!  
Beautiful, beautiful May!

Like a gleam of light in the deepest night,  
Comes a thought of May to my soul in gloom;  
Like a pretty, thorned rose, pure, stern, and white,  
She is the sweetest of the flowers in bloom.  
Like a beautiful song is May to me,  
For her soul and life are all melody.  
Beautiful May! beautiful May!  
Oh, Heaven! I must live apart from thee!  
Beautiful, beautiful May!

## LOVERS' PROVERBS.

Love knows hidden paths.  
Love makes labor light.  
Love makes time pass away, and time makes love pass away.

Love me little, love me long.  
Ami moi un peu, mais continue—Love me little, but keep it up.

Love one that does not love you, answer one that does not call you, and you will run a fruitless race.



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### A New Author to the Front!

Soon to be given in the SATURDAY JOURNAL:

#### TIGER DICK, THE FARO KING;

OR,

#### The Cashier's Crime.

A TALE OF MAN'S HATE AND WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY PHILIP S. WARNE.

As announced, this new story by a new author, is in striking contrast with the old order of things among the "time-honored" authors, whose story is evolved like the rolling out of a panorama, with an occasional halt for the showman to moralize or explain. It is of the new school, which takes only salient and significant acts by strongly-marked characters, and letting them tell their own story, succeeds in producing chapters of surprises, and is full of that interest of *person* which we feel even for a thorough scamp or villain when he acts well his part. The author is the very antipodes of hackneyed; he sees human nature not with other's eyes, but with his own, which are as sharp and searching as those of an eagle; and in incident and plot we have a "new departure" which will be welcomed both for what it gives and for what it suggests.

### TIGER DICK

is a romance of a Western River town, in which a professional "sport" is the marplot and victim in a desperate game. There is, however, no distinctive "hero," for almost every character is a center of deepest interest. The Banker's Own Son, who is to be the sacrifice of scheming scoundrelism—the Young Woman who braves all for his sake and becomes, unconsciously, a remarkable detective—the Banker's Only Daughter, whose fate is fatally involved with that of the cashier—the Decoy of "the Tiger," by whose aid and art much of what happens was brought about—the River Boatman who leads a charge of ruffians in a fearful crisis—all are characters quite new to story literature, and serve to render

### TIGER DICK

a romance as notable in its way as "Overland Kit" is in its peculiar field, and which lead us to expect much from its author, whose second story for our columns is so well under way that we may promise for it an impression that will establish its author's reputation as foremost among the new school of writers of whom Bret Harte was the *avant courier*. He will, we hardly need add, write

ONLY FOR THE SATURDAY JOURNAL.

## The Arm-Chair.

SPELLING-MATCHES are now "having a run" that, with all their ludicrous novelty, promises to achieve good results. As a nation, we are notoriously bad "spellers." Almost every person, even among the well-educated, will fail occasionally in their orthography; but, taking the business correspondence of the day as a fair criterion of the average mastery of the verbal forms of our language, we are forced to admit that there is a sad need of the schoolmaster in counting-rooms, in public and professional offices, and business-life generally.

An order the other day, made by an eminent Wall street operator to his broker, read: "Be 200 shares Union Pacific on 300 Erie to my account."

And this was not Old Uncle Daniel Drew, whose spelling, it is said, has made his brokers all bald-headed in deciphering his orders and communications. It came from one of a hundred men who are magnates in our monetary circles, yet whose early education evidently never reached "baker" in Webster's old-spelling-book. And what is a bad feature of the case, this ignorance does not seem to be a source of the least annoyance or mortification to the delinquents.

The present excitement over the lexicon is well calculated to show, even to the "hard heads," the value of a correct orthography, and we say, give all encouragement to the spelling-match. Make all classes participate, "Ring in" the ministers, the editors, the judges, the lawyers, as well as the tradesman, mechanic and student, for no class is exempt from deficiencies which these matches cannot largely correct.

## Sunshine Papers.

### Bits of Romance.

INTO every life, I think, there has come some bit of romance. There is never a worn, weary, lonely woman—a slighted, sharp-tongued wife—a gay, rollicking bachelor—a plodding, prosaic man of business, who has not one tiny, white, sweet chamber in the heart locked against some pale ghost of the past. Those little gleams of a sweet long ago! How, sometimes, a bar of music, a familiar tone, a shaft of moonlight, a dewy blossom-scented breeze, will revivify them with a touch of pain that we had thought impossible! How after they have lain dimmed and forgotten, under the accumulated films and mental refuse of years, a chance word will rend their coverings and

they will stare us in the face and make us wonder whether the image we conjure is really us, until, like Mignon, we shall scarce recognize ourselves.

There is Eleanor—gay, witty, sarcastic Eleanor—who has counted her birthdays up to thirty, and is the same to-day she was ten years ago. People wonder why Eleanor has never married, and all that spares neither sex nor position, but people do not know of the bit of romance in Eleanor's life. How, years ago, she, in an hour of unreasonable girlish madness, sent from her side her young lover, sent him to exile and death! While sorrowing, remorseful Eleanor longed for his presence, and chided herself for her rashness, her lover was traveling, without a good-bye to any friend, toward California; and the first message that reached his Eastern home was of some wild nights of dissipation terminating in a fatal fever. Eleanor rushed from the bitter stings of his friends, and the reproaches of her own troubled conscience, and the gnawing pain of her heart, to her room, and opened the pages of a book where his last gift was hid—some sweet-scented leaves of which she had been fond—yellow and brittle now—and faint as the dead subtle fragrance floated against her face. Ever since that day Eleanor has buried her bit of romance under her gay, sarcastic manner; and only a few, a few young men and maidens, know how thoroughly she can lay that manner aside when there is a sensible, earnest, kind word of advice to give. But, though Eleanor's romance was so many years ago, it has life still. Stopping upon Broadway to buy a bouquet she will select one which has none of the green leaves in it like her lover's last gift; and not a year ago, at the gift of some flowers plentifully interspersed with them, I saw her written to the lips and forget to finish the witty speech she was making.

Benne is a clergyman, beloved, and earnest, and gentle—one of those pure, tender spirits that seem born to give counsel, and sympathy, and comfort; and Benne has a wife devotedly loved; but there is in his heart a tiny, dim, shadowy recess that holds some shattered imagery. When the silvery moonshine falls athwart a room, Benne lowers the shades, and lights a lamp, and keeps it out, because shafts of such pale sheen have the power to imbue the imagery with form and naturalness, and recall such misery as almost wrecked a life.

Percival is the charm of many a gentleman's party. Handsome, debonaire, successful, he is admired, and sought, and envied. A pet of womankind, a jolly companion, who dreams of the little grave in Percival's heart, holding one only treasure—the remembrance of one summer night—that has kept him from love of a woman through fifteen gay years; and that makes him faint and heart-sick at the sound of one little song!

Miss Maria is dead now; but well I remember the dread I had of her fault-finding ways, and her sharp tongue. And how, one night, in tears at some cold reproach, I sought Addie's room and begged her to sing for me. The doors were open, and Addie sung "Listen to the Mocking-bird," and an air from the Bohemian Girl, and then some little ballad of the sea, of which the only line I remember was, "And the ship went down with the howling of the storm." At that Miss Maria came in and took me in her arms, and kissed me, and cried over me, and carried me off to bed more tenderly than I had ever known her to do before. Miss Maria's hard, rigid, stern life held a bit of romance that the little ballad had unraveled. Years afterward, when her useful place was filled by another, I saw Miss Maria's picture, showing her a blooming girl, instead of the serene-faced woman I had known, taken hand in hand with her brave young sailor, just before he went upon the voyage from which his good ship, with its crew, never returned.

How different would be our views of many lives could we read each heart's bit of romance! Sometimes, indeed not seldom, I fear, we pronounce erring judgment upon many an acquaintance, whose peculiarities and faults may be only the wild growth over heart-graves. Let us judge leniently every live, for none there are that hath not its own secret.

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

### WANTED.

PEOPLE who will think as much of the living as they seem to think of them dead. Truly has some writer said: "Don't write long obituary notices. Save some of your kind words for the living." If that writer carried his precepts into practice he couldn't have been a bad man; his heart must have been good and Grandma and I could have put our trust in him.

I believe in kind words, for they make us better for hearing them. How many a toiler would go down to the grave with tired hearts were it not for the utterance of kindly words! They act like water to the parched throat of the traveler in the desert; they are blessings to many and many a fainting heart. The world would grow cold and callous without them. It is hard to note how few of them people use when they are so plentiful. Yes, we want people to love the dead and at the same time not ignore the living.

People who will not jump at conclusions too readily—who will pause before they leap. Because John Henry says he is going to write a story called "The Millionaire," I want people who will not report that he has stolen or lost that sum, or fallen an heir to it, or is going to receive that price for the story: People who will not accuse us of being engaged to every young man or woman whom we chance to be walking with; who will not say that every time we put pen to paper we are inditing a love-letter; who will not accuse us of being intemperate because the doctor has ordered us to put bay rum on our cheeks as a cure for neuralgia; who will not accuse me of setting myself up for a saint because I am striving in an humble way to make others more true to themselves as I am endeavoring to do toward myself; people who have sense enough to feel enough for other's sufferings to aid them without asking whether they are worthy of it or not.

People whose thoughts do not run on matrimony all the time, and whose happiness does not always consist in making matches; who do not strive to do all they can to bring two persons together into a matrimonial alliance. It seems to me there is much more profitable business for one to follow, and many not open to so many objections. I was going to say something about matches being made in heaven, but my idea of heaven is not one composed of a congress of match-makers, and I think there are sweeter things to occupy the attention of the residents of that happy land. Am I irreverent in saying so, or is my opinion a sensible one? People who are in the habit of making matches must find time hang very heavy on their hands, or they haven't any useful employment to keep them busy.

People are wanted who are "true to the core"—who will love you as well when you

haven't a cent in your pocket as when your pocket-book is stuffed full of greenbacks—who can see worth in you even though that worth does not consist in gold or silver, and who will value you for your goodness of heart though that heart be covered with a ten-cent calico: people who will not be all honey and sugar to your face only to say contemptible things behind your back—who will not fawn upon you in your prosperity and snub you in your poverty—who will not begrudge you a meal or help you to the purchase of clothing when you are in need of it.

Friends are wanted who will not be merely such in name but in reality—who will anticipate your wishes, and not think it too much of a hardship to put themselves out for you. Such friends are worth having, and they are needed. Are there too many of them in the world?

People who will take a supreme delight in making others happy, and showing that it is not such a selfish world as many of us would imagine, are sadly wanted. They are never unwellcome. If advertising would bring them how would those who are weary and heavy-laden advertise! No matter whence they come from, we are willing to claim them for brothers and sisters. Well, and why should we not want them? I am sure they would prove true diamonds, even if their faces are homely, so long as their hearts are beautiful. We cry, God bless them!

EVE LAWLESS.

### CONTRARY TO GOOD MANNERS.

How often many of us are apt to neglect the day of small things and forget that "trifles make perfection."

There are scholars, in some of our country schools, who will come off victorious in a spelling-match because they can spell such words as "paralysis" and "Nebuchadnezzar," and will not even stumble over "Baalam" or "Sennacherib," yet these very ones will spell the word perhaps prehaps, and when asked why misspell so common a word, reply that they "never paid much attention to such common words."

I know of a lady, who prided herself on being a good grammarian, yet always said "I be" for "I am," and in numerous other points, was equally at fault. She would have been quite put out if any one had so much as insinuated she was not a good grammarian when she "had parsed so splendidly at school." There are persons studying algebra who cannot write a well-formed sentence. Others are toiling over Greek and Latin whose English could be much improved. I have known a teacher who taught no grammar in his school because he "hadn't time," yet there was time to spare for other studies. Not a great while ago every one was speaking of the accomplishments of a certain belle, and a literary gentleman was asked for his opinion of her. His reply was characteristic:

"She is a fine musician, dancer and linguist, but she does speak the worst grammar I ever heard."

A correspondent for a New England paper mourns over the fact that some of her countrywomen are so deficient in education, and remarks that she "does not believe scarcely one of them could make out a bill of sale"—the italics are mine, the spelling hers. Corrects others, yet is at fault herself.

Many of us have heard of the man who would not go to see the Cardiff giant, because he believed it was nothing but a "purified statue." A great many of our "statutes" may be "purified," but they have scarcely been as attractive as a petrified statue.

In the "green-room" of one of the theaters there is a dictionary put up on a shelf "for the actors to consult." The leading man of that establishment always pronounces hecatombs "hetacombs."

How very seldom we hear the opera of "Sonnambula" called anything else than "Sonnambula." I was once accused of wrong pronunciation because I said that the word "pantomime" was wrong and "pantomime" correct.

I know these things are not enough to put one in a "stew." They are merely jotted down to show what errors are made daily and that they may be corrected. If we get into the habit of spelling falsely and using bad grammar the fault will grow upon us, and we shall find it hard to break ourselves of the habit.

Grammars and dictionaries are cheap and the time we use in consulting them will not be wasted if thrown away. The murdering of our language is "Contra bonos mores."

F. S. F.

## Foolscap Papers.

### That Cat.

It was the first piece of live stock that I ever owned, and I must say that I had no title deed to it.

Some sympathetic friend left him in our yard one night, and withheld his name. It was one of those unostentatious acts of pure benevolence which are so deserving of credit.

This cat answered to the name of Thomas; although if a piece of meat was in the question, he would answer to any other name just as well. That was his way.

This cat belonged to the feline race, and from the morning we took him in he began to make himself at home, although the ceremony of introduction had been overlooked.

He was not a very prepossessing cat, Tom wasn't, for his eyes belonged to the sore order of architecture; his nose was hardly of the classical model, and his fur looked like it had been scorched by the stoves of many generations.

He rarely smiled, but had a dejected look about the face and a serious air about him that excited my pity.

I never took such sudden interest in any cat since, although my house has been of late a regular foundling hospital for all the useless cats in our town; people take the utmost pains to donate their good-for-nothing quadrupeds of this kind to me.

Sleep seemed to be Tom's normal condition, and he never woke up unless he was hungry.

He was one of the best jumpers I ever saw; he could jump three feet high—that is to say, he could jump up on the dinner-table with the greatest ease, when there was no one present, but somehow he was one of the worst cats to jump down I ever saw. I have frequently taken him tenderly by the tail and dashed him forcibly against the wall, but he managed to get over it without any feelings of revenge.

At the table, I could always tell when he was hungry, for he would put his fore-paws up on my knees and dig his toe-nails in.

He had many desperate battles with the rats, the rats always being the attacking party. I never could see how they could disturb him, either, because he never bothered them. In fact, I always thought he was their greatest

friend and deserved better treatment at their hands than that. He never injured one of them in his life, except in self-defense, and then he didn't hurt it much.

It was very a-mew-sing to hear his mew.

He was the most news-local cat I ever saw. If he had been properly worked up into fiddle-strings I would give \$250 for the fiddle, and on that fiddle I could have played—thunder, and made Rome howl. It would have been the noisiest fiddle in existence.

He seemed to be a very unfortunate cat, for whenever anybody put his foot down, Tom was there, and always managed to be there until the foot was lifted again, but he let his situation be known at such times.

If anything fell off the stove Tom always kept it from striking the floor. Flat-irons and skillets seemed to be his principal hold.

He also appropriated all the hot water that was spilled off the stove, until he was as badly scorched as some battle-scarred fur-reigner.

The hired girl practiced so much that she could let every stick of wood fall on Tom with the utmost precision; and the number of kicks which she gave him could not be stated unless I had the figures of the public debt at hand.

In the kitchen he seemed to lead a dog's life, and this seemed to throw him into a deeper melancholy than ever, and he took his spite out in every way he could devise—got to knocking dishes off the shelves, clawing the children's legs, frightening the family at night with the most ghostly talks, and if any demonstration was made against him, he was always sure to go through a window like a shot, or go through a looking-glass.

I saw that everything would go to destruction and take me along with it if I didn't take in some of my sympathy and kill that cat.

But I hated to kill him, for I thought it would be death to him, and I tried the more humane plan of depositing him at night in other people's yards, "to be left until called for," but he never stayed long enough to be called for.

It was on one of these occasions that I got a cat-nip which nearly threw me into cat-lep-sy.

He appreciated something to eat so highly that it seemed a sin to take one of his nine lives, which would of course be manslaughter in only the ninth degree, yet I resolved to drown him.

The first time I drowned him wasn't a success, but the second time failed; however, the third time he escaped, yet the fourth time he saved himself; but when I tried the fifth time he came out all right, though quite out of breath, so I gave that up.

I began to imagine that he was the spirit in cat-shape of some old enemy of mine, who wanted to make the balance of my life interesting if not pleasant. I hired boys to take him into the country and then nailed horseshoes over the door, but he always came back better for the exercise he had in walking.

At last, irritated beyond degree—beyond several degrees and some minutes, I chopped him in two with an ax, and even then it was all that I could do to keep the two halves from coming together again. He died from the effects in a few days.

"Throw no cats over here!" I have put up along my fence, and they mind me well, for they don't throw any more over; they gently reach them over.

I have engaged a house in another part of the city where I am not known, and hope yet to spend the balance of my days in comparative peace.

If anybody has a cat to give away, I don't want him.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

## Woman's World.

### NOTES AND NOTICES.

TRAMPING up and down Broadway, on a windy day, with the thermometer at 35°, in order to see "Spring Openings," is frigid fun. I'd rather stay at home and write, but that won't do; the order is to go forth and see for yourself; so as to-day is "copy-day," I sally out, and with eyes blinded with dust gaze into windows and showcases, unjustly by the eager throng of ladies who fairly swarm on pleasant days along the great street.

There now is no longer any question in the matter of overdress goods, for polonaises, redingotes, tabliers and basque bodices, with or without plaids, for squares have taken the place of stripes. Some few of the newest costumes are made entirely of the plaid material, but for the most part it is judiciously mixed with plain fabric. The plaids are not regular, they do not look like even checks; on the contrary, they are broken and crossed with lines, more like the plaid patterns on Tartan scarfs than plain checks. There is a great variety in the designs, and as a rule, the checks are somewhat larger, they are either a very dark color, with white, or else some shade of beige.

We may also say that all outside garments are to be worn much longer. The English walking-jacket, cut long, will be one of the styles, but the French saque, made of black Sielienne, with trimmings of lace and fringe, embroidered bands, ostrich feather trimmings, or Titan braid, will be newer, and consequently more fashionable. For those who desire a change from jackets, are capes and mantles fitting in at the waist, thus forming a kind of sleeve, as for instance, a round cape in the back coming over the arms in front in long, square tabs.

In street costumes the prevalence of browns and grays is already quite noticeable, colors that are certain to be popular throughout the season for walking suits. They are seen not only in the plaid overdresses worn with silk skirts, but in cashmere ones over silk, which will be quite as fashionable a combination as the other. These suits are, many of them, made with what is advertised to above as the French saque—a half-fitting basque in the back and loose sacque fronts. The tendency is toward short backs, that is, short in comparison with the fronts, which sometimes extend into long, square tabs. The last is newest, while the other has the advantage of showing a more elaborate arrangement of lace, etc., about the neck. The sleeves are cut straight, with flaring cuffs at the wrist to match the collar, or they may be half-flowing.

New spring waterproofs for ladies are made after the "Ulster" pattern for gentlemen, which is a long, straight sack, belted in from the sides upon the back and finished with a shawl-shaped hood and pockets, including a neat little pocket in the cuff of the sleeve for car-fare, stamps, tickets, change, and the like. The same design will be used for linen, as the warm weather approaches. Though it has nothing of beauty to recommend it, there is something refreshing in its plain and unpretentious ugliness, after the "looping" and "draping" *ad infinitum* with which we have been nauseated.

GRACE LISTON.

CITIES force growth, and make men talkative and entertaining, but they make them artificial.

## Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders. Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy"; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, leaving off each page as it is written, and carefully giving its full or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Contributors must look to the columns for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We decline "So Near, So Far," "Paul and Opal," "Spring," "The Midnight Murder," "Did She Smoke," "Maple Leaves," "The Woman Nature," "The Penn. Legacy," "The Sister's Grave," "My Night Alone," "The Monument of Ages," "An Old Joke," "Mary's Black Sheep," "Aunt Hope's Cottage."

We file for use "Sometimes," "My City Friends," "A New Grace," "The Base Diamond," "Life," "A Sweet Hope," "The Sister's Trust," "Mrs. Bacon's Best Dress."

W. W. R., Galesburg. We have the 25c. series under consideration. Also the serials spoken of.

ANALADE. Call upon any theatrical manager; or, what is better for you, visit some well-known actress.

C. R. W. Have written you. You are not qualified as yet, to write for the press. Your work is very crude.

AUTHOR OF "YELLOW JEWEL." Have lost your address. Will examine the serial referred to if it is submitted.

J. G. Danbury. Have on hand too much of its kind to care to pay for more.

MARY N., Pittsburgh. Story is very crude. Must give up all idea of writing for the press until you are more proficient in grammar and composition.

DAN GRAY. Overland Kit—who is no other than Dick Talbot—runs through the entire four stories of the series.

D. J. M. Poem is rather long and the subject trivial. Poems on spring are countless and excite no interest unless exceptionally good.

SCHOOLBOY. Can't say in what songsters you will find the songs mentioned. Some or all, we believe, are in the Beadle Dime Song-Books series, which contains almost every good song published during the last fifteen or twenty years.

H. C. N. We published the novel referred to in book form, but it is not now in print.

RED PANTHER. Bronchitis and shortness of breath are not to be cured by any medication. The surest remedy is in a change of climate. Go inland.

GEO. G. M. Have referred your knotty question to the editor of Beadle's Dime Base-Ball Player. He is considered *authoritatively* among players.

ASPERITIA. A good silk hat can be had for \$5; pay no more. And another thing: never let the tradesman who overcharges a second call; if you can avoid him, do so.

J. M. B. Fish from Lake Erie are sold in large quantities in the New York market. The Lake whitefish are great favorites. They come packed in ice direct from Sandusky and Toledo.

OSTRICH. We can hardly pronounce on the merits of the several plows used in our Middle States. Write to the Remington Co., Y. for their catalogue, or to Griffing & Co., Courtlandt street, N. Y.

PETERBORO GIRL. We know of no school of any prominence where girls are educated. The Lake school is largely devoted to the student giving Sherman, Grant, Sheridan and Rosecrans were Ohio men, and McClellan was a resident of Cincinnati when the war broke out. The latter supplies competent prominent generals to the Federal Army during the war.

IRON FIST. Mold or mudlage does no harm.—Can only advise your friend to lead an abstemious life, or bathe frequently in cold water. The latter is Dispensation of some sort is the source of his trouble, we dare say.

GEO. N. J. Buy of garden or flower seeds twice the quantity necessary, as the seeds were good. The seedsmen generally mix their old and refuse stock with the new. Good for them but bad for those who plant. Save your own seed as far as possible, then you know what you plant.

JON M. By the "engineer's trade" we suppose you mean that of locomotive engineer. It is a very good and well-paid calling, but a hazardous one, and one which takes the person engaged in it a great deal of time. Married men ought to go into the shop, being the running work to the unmarried, where it is possible to do so.

C. D. S. The perennial phlox is what you want. The list of perennial flowers is given in the "Perennial" book, which, once started, will last a lifetime without annual planting. The "everlasting" flowers are not perennials, but annuals, requiring seed-planting each year.

BLUE GRASS BOY. It was one hundred years ago that Daniel Boone penetrated to Kentucky (April, 1775). Then all the present Ohio Valley Territory was a howling wilderness. The advance was in the interest of Colonel Henderson and others who had conceived the idea of a New Republic to be called the Transylvania Republic, and Boone negotiated with the Cherokee for the territory of what is now Tennessee and Kentucky. This scheme, however, was declared illegal by both Virginia and North Carolina, and the settlement of the land under special grants from the States nixed.

BUBBLES. "What is meant by trolling, and does it require bait?" Trolling, in America, consists in trailing a bait behind a rowing or sailing boat at a certain distance, to imitate a fish swimming. Bait is very seldom used. Bright metal plates called "spoons" (of the shape of spoon bowls) are hung on a swivel, so as to turn freely, and sparkle with or without complete the troll, which resembles nothing living. Bluefish trolls are called "squids," are of bright metal and fish-shaped. All trolls are meant to imitate the fish which the angler desires. Blood is very attractive to game fishes. Hence the red rags, feathers, etc.

PETER PIPER asks: "Where can one catch sheep-head?" On the south coast of Long Island and the mouth of New York bay are the best places. Late in the fall the sheep-head is numerous on the Virginia and Carolina coasts, but nowhere so good as in the latitude of New York. The sheep-head is a small, strong line and heavy hook and sinker. The best fishing is found by sounding for a muskellunge, and fishing over it. The sheep-head pulls like a coil. The hand line is generally used, but rods are sometimes preferred.

L. R. T. The "Laughing Plant" grows in central and eastern portions of Arabia. Its seeds produce an effect similar to laughing gas. These seeds exhalate and excite the eater, causing him to laugh loudly, sing, dance, and cut capers generally for about an hour, when he falls to sleep, and upon returning to his senses retains the memory of his behavior while under the influence of the seeds.

ESOPUS CREEK. Glass certainly was in common use in Greece, Rome, and probably Egypt nearly or quite 2,000 years ago. Probably the Romans were the first to employ glass for windows. Some remnants of glass panes are to be found to-day, in their frames, in buried houses of Herculaneum and Pompeii. They substituted glass as a material for bottles instead of leather, which is still in vogue among the poorer classes in the Orient.

J. R. J., Alton. The measurement of stellar distances is by parallax. Parallax is but an approximation. The star Sirius is put down as being distant from the earth 82,000,000,000 miles. This is the nearest "fixed star"—or stars which are suns and the centers of a planetary system like our own. The next nearest fixed star is the double star, called 61 Cygni, whose parallax is 0.3483 seconds, making its assumed distance from the earth 20,000,000,000 miles. The mean radius of the earth's orbit—a distance so enormous that light, which moves at a velocity of 183,000 miles per second, would require nine and one-fourth years to traverse the space



## ONLY PANSIES.

BY LUCILLE HOLLS.

Only pansies!  
They slipped from paper-grown yellow and old,  
Stabbing my heart with a nameless pain;  
Links, though slight, of a broken chain,  
Lying in sunlight gold.

Only pansies!  
I gather them softly against my breast,  
Where they once rested, years ago;  
Gleaming then with a royal glow,  
From the faces they pressed.

Only pansies!  
Sweet bright pansies;  
The ones that my lover each morning laid  
Dew-washed, upon my bosom fair,  
Or blooming in my braided hair.

Only pansies!  
For these pansies—  
Like the breath of the morning wind that blew  
Against my face the day he died,  
Died! And in the evening tide,  
Refused his love so true,  
And his pansies!

Now, dead pansies  
Are the ones I hold to my aching heart.  
Their sweet life gone, their velvet bloom  
Faded, as he whose bitter doom  
My life has shared in part.

Over these pansies,  
Holding pansies  
The sunlight has kissed since the sad day  
That I looked on my lover dead,  
I would my life, like theirs, had fled!  
But my lips cannot pray  
Over pansies.

Little pansies,  
Oh, tell me for him whose lips I made cold,  
Can sin like mine be forgiven?  
Will my love seek me in heaven?  
Or must my future hold  
But dead pansies?

The Terrible Truth:  
OR,  
THE THORNHURST MYSTERY.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,  
AUTHOR OF "STRANGELY WED," "THE FALSE  
WIDOW," "ADRIA, THE ADOPTEE," "CO-  
RAL AND RUBY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

UNDER THE ELMS.

ANOTHER turn of the kaleidoscope, another succession of brilliant mornings, afternoons and nights, a whole week during which the gaiety had not flagged, and New Year's eve was ushered in.

Thornhurst mansion was ablaze with light, alive with merriment. There was a grand ball there on this New Year's eve which was meant to close the dissipation of this holiday-time. It was not meant to close the pleasures at Thornhurst, but, as those to come would be of a quieter order and in greater moderation so this occasion was to eclipse all that had gone before.

Without it was a gusty night with ragged, black clouds chasing across the sky, with the moon and stars gleaming through at intervals, with the wind tearing like a moaning spirit through the bare drooping elms, and in the dark cedar grove a legion of unquiet spirits might have been confined to judge by the plaints issuing from thence. A depressing, ghostly night with its rushes of light and shade, with a crisp snow upon the ground, but with the bitter air which had prevailed through the day softening, and some light flakes floating down as the ragged clouds gathered more thickly overhead.

Nora pausing in a window with her hand upon her escort's arm, shivered as she looked out upon the dreary scene. A band was crashing the Guards' waltz at their back, warmth and perfumed atmosphere and brilliant lights were about them, but one of those loud wind-whirls pierced to their ears, mournful, eerie, as though it might have foretold a doom.

"If I were superstitious I should believe that some harm was to befall this house to-night," she said. "That sounds gruesome enough to be a banshee's warning."

Sir Rupert, looking out for a moment with a shade of the gloom of the night upon his brow, smiled down upon her.

"Abandon the dreary outlook then," he suggested. "Come and waltz with me instead. I don't very often dance, and you are one of the few who might tempt me to the indulgence."

"Your pardon, Sir Rupert. I claim Miss Cartaret for the next waltz."

It was Mr. Telford coming up to remind her of her promise. "All men may not be favored of the gods, but few of us that will not wring recognition from the angels when we may. Never suppose I can be forgetful of a promise, however oblivious you may have become, Miss Cartaret."

She took his arm with a glance around and a backward word to the baronet. "There is Miss Montrose, cornered in by two merciless mammas interested in having their own pretty daughters near as possible first in the field. Can't you relieve her from that extremely uncomfortable position?"

All the gloom cleared out of the baronet's face on the instant. He had looked and looked in vain for Miss Montrose during the earlier part of the evening. It was not for him to know that once he had passed within two feet of her, and only the speedy intervention of Mrs. Grahame's voluminous skirts had saved him the discovery, that that lady on some plausible pretext, had whisked her immediately away to the obscurest corner. Sir Rupert's awakened interest was apparent enough. Should the great party of the season, the wealthy baronet for whom half the beauty of New York was angling, be surrendered ignominiously to a young person who had never before been recognized by even the society here?—one who was most probably an adventuress and an interloper, for some hint of the worthlessness of that Southern plantation had got abroad notwithstanding all the caution of Walter Montrose. Never if subtlety of interested chaperone could effect a rescue.

Destiny was against Mrs. Grahame this once, however. Sir Rupert made his way directly to the obscure corner, and led Miss Montrose out of it, in gratified triumph.

"I was disappointed at believing you not present," he said, "inclined to quarrel with every one if you had gone off as I supposed you had without ever saying good-by. In that case I would have hunted you up in the morning to make my own adieu."

"You go soon, then?"

"To-morrow afternoon, New Year's Day though it be. I am to see a friend off for London on the third."

"My father and myself leave for Georgia, the day after to-morrow. You will have the opportunity of saying a long farewell within the next two hours, Sir Rupert, since I leave here early. Quite a number of people make it a practice to turn a new leaf every New Year's day, to begin a fresh era of their lives. I shall make my preparation by packing a trunk and leaving the dead past of six years spent here behind me."

"Do you throw off all remembrances so easily? I have an objection to saying that word 'farewell'; I shall ask it yet to let me make it *au revoir*. Can you tell me who is that gentleman just entering? He is the very image of a person I have seen."

She glanced up, a smoldering fire leaping on the instant into those slumberous, dark eyes.

"Who is he like, Sir Rupert? It is my father."

"Your father! And that makes another coincidence. He is the picture of what John Montrose, Earl of Cleveland, was a dozen years ago, of what young Lord Charles will be in twenty years to come. A vague reminiscence comes up to me, the recollection of hearing of a wandering younger brother of the house. Miss Montrose, is it possible—"

"Don't imagine it possible if you were going to conjure a relationship between our own and your noble Sussex house. America is a fine, large country, but all the black sheep of titled aristocracy need not of necessity have come here, or having come need not be confounded with honest republicans who chance to bear the name. I at least would never covet the distinction of such relationship. Do you not find it very close here, Sir Rupert? Will you take me into the air for a moment?"

The quick eyes of Miss Montrose had seen that her father was making his way slowly toward them through the crowd, and her woman's intuition divined that it was with the object of being presented to Sir Rupert Archer, and more, that the baronet would fill in his mind the imaginary position he had up to this date ascribed to Vane Vivian. She never would fulfill the mission he had set aside for her—she had put it out of her power should the desire ever come—and she would not be the tool to throw an unsuspecting victim within reach of what must be futile machinations.

Walter Montrose had gained admittance through the sublime effrontery which characterized the man. He had fastened on young Telford at the village that day, plying him with questions relative to the doings at Thornhurst during the week past.

"You are going there to-night of course," he said. "So am I. Is it asking too much for you to take me up on your way?"

Telford, good-naturedly, promised. He was by no means a quick-brained young man, and it was five minutes after Montrose had gone before the idea struggled into his cranium that it was at all a strange matter for the latter to be going to Thornhurst.

"They've closed the vendetta, I suppose," mused Telford. "Whatever it was all about, the colonel always seemed to have a grudge bitter as wormwood against Montrose. It's been patched up through that magnificent daughter, I'd be willing to bet my roan."

Fortunately for the ownership of the roan, there was no one by to take the bet. Mr. Telford shaped the surprise which grew upon him during the day into words when he redeemed his promise that night.

"I thought the colonel and you made a habit of being at daggers' points," said he. "I did not know you had got about on sociable terms, and it is something of a wonder not to know all that has occurred in this neighborhood."

"I am not absolutely sure of it myself," rejoined Mr. Montrose, coolly. "I have not been formally favored with an invitation, but my daughter was solicited as a guest there, which I take as tantamount to extending the same courtesy to me. I'm willing to put into practice that good old maxim about forgiving and forgetting."

Mr. Telford had his own doubts in regard to which side forgiving and forgetting might most properly apply, but he had put the best face possible upon the matter and followed in the wake of Mr. Montrose when Thornhurst was reached, a trifle curious to witness the meeting between these two long-standing enemies. The colonel turned from one relay of arrivals to find himself face to face with Walter Montrose. For one instant they stood so, as duellists determined to fight it out to the last night have done, then the latter extended his hand, saying:

"To effect a reconciliation, it is necessary there should be an overture somewhere, Colonel Vivian, and I have taken it upon myself to make the overture. I am sure you will not refuse me a welcome, and I would not permit myself to be deterred for the lack of an invitation which might have been proffered had my frame of mind been known. I should like to know, when I leave here in two days more, that I am at peace with all the world."

A very commendable sentiment very smoothly uttered, but Walter Montrose was not the style of man to be ever quite at peace with all the world. There was a struggle in the colonel's heart. Had the man come there to gloat over the misery which had befallen him, or could he mean in reality just what he said? In either case, Colonel Vivian was too punctilious a gentleman to raise a scene there and there. His guests' eyes were upon him; he bowed frigidly, and not being able to overlook the extended hand, gave his. However sincere the other's profession may have been, with that act Colonel Seymour Vivian put aside his prejudices. Never a hypocrite, he would not give his hand to a man and cherish ill-will in his heart.

"Bygones are bygones," he said, "and you are welcome to Thornhurst, Mr. Montrose."

"I wonder if the millenium isn't coming," murmured Mr. Telford, who by this time had found his way to his innamorata's side. "Whoever would have supposed that rabid old lion, Colonel Vivian, would have given in so lamely? I looked to see him game to the last."

"At any rate, it's a mercy there was no scene," rejoined Miss Gray, and that was the unuttered thought in more minds than hers. One there felt the mortification of the encounter more deeply than the colonel himself, felt humiliated in herself that she had indirectly been the means of leading to it.

The baronet led her away from the thronged rooms, through a glass door opening from the library to a side veranda. He had left her for a moment and gone to the cloak-room to secure her wrap, a voluminous woolen mantle, which he placed about her shoulders. They were sheltered from the wind, a few stars shone brightly through a rift in the clouds, but at the best it was a wild night, with the promise of a storm before day. She had asked to be brought here in the desire to escape seeing her father and the baronet brought together, and now that she was here, realized for the first time the embarrassment of finding herself alone in his presence.

"A fitful night; I did not know to what I was tempting you, Sir Rupert. Let me make amends by urging you back to the brightness of the rooms without delay."

"You do not appear to dislike it yourself."

"No; I have an odd passion for fierce tempests, a positive liking for all sorts of rough weather. Nature is never so alluring to me as in her wildest moods."

"You will be content to let me detain you here for a moment, then? I asked you back there to let me say *au revoir* at our parting. May I, in the course of a few months, come to see you in your Southern home? I will estimate it as a priceless boon to be granted the privilege."

His tone, more than his words, brought a new revelation to her. What could she say? There was only one course to pursue, but how could she refuse to least wound an honorable, high-toned gentleman? He went on speaking gravely and earnestly.

"I will not leave you in doubt of my motive, Miss Montrose. I have learned to care for you as I never cared for woman before in this single week since we first met. The time is too short to hope I have awakened any return. If the time ever does come when our acquaintance is prolonged, when you have learned to know me better, when you can give me an answer to what you must know is in my heart to-night, it will be time enough then to plead for myself. What I ask is not to hold you compromised in any degree, but to grant me the favor of becoming better known to you."

Her face was turned away, but there was a tremor in her voice as she spoke, showing how his confidence touched her.

"You do me more honor than I deserve by having thought of me so kindly, Sir Rupert. I must beg—it will be better if you never think of me again. I am grateful, believe me, and the best return I can make for such noble frankness as yours is to urge that you will never attempt to see me again; never think of me if you can help. Oh, Sir Rupert, what is that?"

She clasped his arm nervously, shaken from her habitual self-command. A cloud had broken, and the full moon shone down brightly for a moment. It shone upon a moving form among the elms, which drew back quickly into shadow. Sir Rupert, too, had seen the form, but his own solution for the appearance came with the momentary glimpse.

"Some one strolling out in the air, or perhaps a farmer's boy of the vicinity taking his view of the ball from a distance," he remarked, carelessly. "The wind is rising; I will not detain you here longer. But I must hope still for the permission I have asked before we part."

He held open the door for her to pass through, following himself, but left her with a word, the moment they reached the throng. He made his way to where Nora stood, for the moment unattended.

"Vane is here," he said, in a tone which should reach no ear but hers.

"Here?—where? Has he seen the colonel? Wait, come this way. Now tell me."

A few steps placed a column between them and the crowd, and Nora's eager face uplifted, her brown eyes lit with expectancy and apprehension.

"He has not seen any one. I had but a glimpse of him, lingering under the elms, but I could not be mistaken. It was positively Vane. He has come, although I wrote to him it would be better not to do so. I could hope for no good from it, when I saw from day to day how bitter and unrelenting the colonel has been. I am going out to speak to him; naturally he does not wish to face all these guests, and is most probably waiting an opportunity to enter unobserved."

"Would you mind, Sir Rupert?"—Nora's face drooped and her flowing hair shaded it—"if I go instead? I should like to see Vane, and it may be my last chance. Colonel Vivian will not soften—he will order him from the house most probably, and Vane will go with no pleasant remembrance of this night."

"Go, by all means. I hoped you might wish for it."

She flew up to her room to throw a waterproof over her evening dress, to thrust her slippered feet into fur overshoes, then sped down a back-way and across the snow-crusted lawn to the line of elms. The wind was just swaying the bare, drooping branches now, and there was light enough to show her a dark form leaning against a tree-trunk, watching the lighted front. He neither heard the light, fleet step, nor saw the approaching shape; she stood by his side and put out her hand to touch his arm before he was aware of her presence.

"Vane!" He started and looked around at her. "Sir Rupert told me that you are going away, and I want to say to you how truly I regret the misfortune which have estranged you from your home and friends."

"You are too lenient, Miss Cartaret. There is no reason why you should not join with all the rest in denouncing the atrocious deeds of which I have been guilty."

"There is a reason," she said, meeting his moody eyes with brave, sympathetic glance. "I am your friend, even though you do not care to acknowledge me as such. I know you have felt hardly toward me, and I know why. I want to thank you—her face drooped, and her fingers worked nervously with a button of her cloak—"for being so honest when the colonel proposed his plan to you. I never could have consented if you had, and I never dreamed until afterward of his intention. He wanted to be reconciled with you that night, you know."

"I beg pardon, I do not know," he interrupted. "He came to denounce me, as I deserved, but it was none the less hard for all that."

"That was afterward. He did not find you at your lodgings; he returned to the house and met Dare, who took him to that place."

"Dare!" he gave her a keen glance. "Dare went with me there."

"He left you there while he returned with a story for your father's ear which I believe was purely his own invention, of your desperation and his fear that you meant harm to yourself. A servant chanced to overhear the conversation, but was discreet enough to say nothing until the result came out. I believe still, as I did from the first, that he has been the means of bringing all this evil upon you."

Vane's lips compressed in a hard line. Doubts of Dare had crept into his mind of late, despite himself. His face softened as he looked at her.

"If you are my friend, Nora, it repays me a hundred-fold for the loss of those who were friends and have turned against me. I have only one thing to regret in my soul, and that is my father's just anger. I could not go away, perhaps forever, without making one effort for his forgiveness. If I ever redeem that part of my life which is past, I will come back; if not—"

She laid her hand upon his arm again with beseeching eyes turned upon his face.

"If not—you will let me say it to you, because I am your friend—if not, you will promise that no desperation shall ever drive you to attempt your own life again?"

A hot flush swept over his brow.

"You apparently know all about my recklessness. I do promise faithfully, since you ask it. I did not mean it even then. The plot

was in my pocket—some way, I found it in my hand. I don't believe I would have used it, but Dare wrenched my hand away and it went off. Hark!"

Wheels crushed through the crisp snow, and the moon coming out brightly showed a vehicle from the village livery-stable roll up the drive. A little, shabby man sprung down and ascended the steps of the mansion. In a moment the door opened and closed him in, and the two under the elms looked at each other wonderingly.

"That man came down in the train with me," said Vane. "I observed him, because we two were all to get off at the station. Don't look alarmed, Nora; his business is not apt to concern me. I have not been guilty of any later misdeeds."

Her cloak had fallen back, and the white moonrays shone full upon her—on the pale, sweet face, the luminous eyes, the bright, floating hair, bound back with white roses and pearls—a picture which was a daily comforting remembrance to Vane Vivian for months after—which he never forgot while he lived. She looked for a moment up into eyes of golden-brown light, her hand lay in his warm clasp, and that moment stood out separate and distinct from anything that had gone before in all her existence. Then he replaced her wrap reverently.

"I shall make my way to my old room when I can do so unobserved, and wait there until I can see my father alone. Say good-night, Nora, and let me take you back to the house."

She said it with lips that quivered and with tears wetting her cheeks.

## CHAPTER XIX.

A LIFE GOES OUT WITH THE YEAR.

THE shabby little man admitted at that unseasonable hour had been ushered into the library, and there Colonel Vivian met him five minutes later.

"You wished to see me, sir?" he asked.

"If you are Colonel Vivian."

The colonel motioned assent to his inquiring glance.

"My business is important, but I can make it brief. Is this your signature?"

He drew out a pocketbook as he spoke, and with business-like dexterity extracted a slip of paper which he spread before the other's eyes. The colonel looking, turned white, his face took on a stony rigidity terrible to see. It was a check for fifty thousand dollars, drawn in favor of Abraham Moses, signed with his name.

"It is a forgery," he said, hoarsely.

The little man bowed and extracted a second slip, laying it before him in the same manner.

"This one has been realized upon. Is it genuine?"

There was anger in the colonel's gaze, his hand shook as he turned the paper over, and he said, in that constrained, unnatural voice:

"Like the other it is forged."

He recoiled slightly and sunk back into the chair which his watchful visitor placed, his eyes on the other, with his hand motioning him to proceed.

"I am the bank's messenger. The smaller check for twenty thousand dollars was presented yesterday morning and cashed without suspicion. The other was offered during the afternoon, and, being for so large an amount, was subjected to more rigid inspection. The authenticity of the signature was doubted and the person presenting it—a Jewish money-lender of doubtful character—taken into custody on suspicion, which deepened when he referred to the party of the morning as his voucher. The Jew gave bonds for his appearance, and I was dispatched down here. May I ask what will your action be, Colonel Vivian?"

"What should it be?" asked the colonel, harshly. "The checks are forgeries; treat them as such."

"At the risk of tracing them beyond the persons yet involved? It is best to speak freely, sir. The testimony of the Jew and his friend will probably implicate you soon. They aver that the checks were given in payment of debts of his contracting, transmitted through an agent purporting to come from you. Their dates are similar, three weeks back, and some difficulty which made it advisable for the precious pair to remain mum occasioned the delay in the presentation of the checks. The bank officers are your friends and are willing to hush up the matter if you desire it."

The colonel sat with his head thrown back, his ash-colored unyielding as a rock.

"What is it you mean?" he asked. "What is it they would have me do?"

"Acknowledge the signature which has been honored as genuine. There is hardly a doubt but the story those rascals tell is the true one, and it is not probable the one will be frightened into refunding the cash. Let the other whistle for his; his own basis is too shaky to risk appealing to the law."

There was no softening of the old man's rigid features; it was no mercy toward the son who had been his idol once, who had brought such misery and humiliation upon him since, prompting the decision he arrived at while the other was still speaking.

"For the sake of my old friends, to spare any loss to the bank, I will do what I would not do to avert the worst consequences which might overtake that unhappy boy."

"In that case I was to assure you there would be no one to appear against the Jew, and the sooner the false check is reduced to the consistency of ashes the less chance there is of it telling tales some time to come."

The colonel watched him apply a match to the spurious paper, watched it shrivel and fall in black flakes, and then roused himself.

"Accept my thanks for your own and your employers' courtesy," he said, gravely. "And now let me present you among my guests."

"Thanks, but I return immediately. I take the midnight-express from the village, and have little more than easy time to reach it."

"At least let me order you refreshments here," urged the colonel, hospitably.

"Thanks again. I took supper at the inn after arriving. I would not choose anything more. Permit me to tender congratulations over the best possible ending of a very unpleasant affair."

"I believe the old soldier meant the very letter of what he said," soliloquized the bank-messenger, as he mounted his conveyance and cast a backward glance toward the mansion. "The young fellow might have taken his chances—chances good as certainty—for Sing Sing before he would have lifted a finger. It might be better for the world if there were more of the same stuff in other fathers."

What untoward fates were at work to have brought Vane Vivian to Thornhurst that night! He had come up into the very shadow of the house itself, the desire for reconciliation, for his father's forgiveness and blessing swelling in his heart to a positive pain. He kept to the side, walking slowly, intending to enter by a little

used back way, but a stream of light from the glass door and the sight of his father's form erect and alone in the center of the library arrested him. One second later and he stood in that angered presence. The colonel had thought his cup of bitterness full, but it needed the blow of this night to make it overflow. Now as he turned and without warning faced the author of all the desolation come upon him, his stern rigidity of countenance struck a chill to the young man's soul.

"Father," he spoke, imploringly, "there was forgiveness for the prodigal, and forgiveness is what I have come to plead from you. Don't turn from me, don't spurn me as I deserve. Act of mine shall never disgrace you again. I am going away, forever it may be. You have been the best, the noblest, the most indulgent of fathers. Don't refuse me your blessing at the last."

Slowly the colonel's hand went up, slowly and in halting utterances his words fell:

"Not one step nearer. How dare you come beneath my roof—how dare you force yourself before my sight. You have cursed my sight, you have brought home to me the meaning of words never known to a Vivian before—shame, disgrace, treachery, crime."

"Father!"

"Silence! I told you weeks ago I had no son. I thought to cast you out of my life as I cast you out of my heart then. But the ties of nature cannot be severed at will. You have been to me since like a brand of infamy; I have been out to the soul that your crimes must reflect upon me, must be ever a mortification and a reproach."

The younger man found it hard to realize that this was hasty, vociferous Colonel Vivian who spoke. There were none of the old abusive epithets, but this slow, heavy utterance was expressive of more deadly anger than had ever found vent in his fiercest tornadoes of wrath.

"Let me speak, I beg," pleaded Vane. "I have been guilty, I have caused you to suffer, and I have not one word to offer for my own palliation. You have been merciful where I did not expect it, you spared me when I deserved to suffer the most. I thank you and bless you for it now. If I live I shall never cease to strive to become what I have not been yet—the worthy son of such a father."

"Hypocrite! traitor! ingrate!" broke in fierce aspiration from the colonel's purple lips. Great knotted veins stood out upon his forehead, a clammy perspiration oozed there, and his hand clenched with the tenseness of a vise. "Go, and the curses you have earned, instead of blessings, follow you! Go!"

He pointed to the door. Vane would have remonstrated again, but that unwavering hand, that scathing gaze would brook no lingering. He went with a heart like lead, with feet which faltered in bearing him away. Across the lawn, where the wind was sweeping again, blindly on to the avenue gates, and there he came suddenly upon a tall, dark, female form, so suddenly that there was no chance of avoiding it, and the encounter recalled him to himself.

"Miss Montrose?" he asked, doubtfully, lifting his hat.

It was Miss Montrose. She had little inclination for gay surroundings left after that frank, manly confidence from Sir Rupert. She had lingered to inform Nora of her intention to return home that night, had refused the use of the carriage proffered, and had slipped away unobserved and unattended at the first opportunity. Walter Montrose was in the midst of his enjoyment within the walls of Thornhurst. He had attained his object; he had gained an introduction to the baronet, he had listened to Mrs. Grahame's praises of his celebrity, and succeeded in discovering his yearly income; had learned beyond doubt that Vane Vivian was disinherited without hope of recall.

The two, met at the gate, passed a few casual remarks.

"Are you alone?" asked Vane. "I am on my way to the depot, but possibly I may have time to see you home; it is not much out of the way. I want to catch the midnight-express."

The last word was scarcely out of his mouth, when a bell-like tone cleft the air. Another and another followed; it was the clock in the village steeple striking twelve.

"Fortunately railway time is twelve minutes slower," said Vane, hurriedly. "Sorry I must leave you so abruptly, Miss Montrose. Good-night!"

He dashed away over the crisp frozen road. He dashed into the station just as the last bell of the already moving train clanged at its loudest. There was no time for a ticket; he sprang upon a rear platform with an impetus which seriously discomfited a passenger standing there, but in his breathless haste he failed to observe that it was the same shabby little man who had traveled down with him, who also had made an appearance at Thornhurst that night.

Within the mansion the tone of the steeple-bell mingled with the chime of a tall bronze clock in the hall.

"Now to watch the Old Year out and the New Year in," said Miss Gray.

"May we watch through all future occasions of the sort in the same way—together," murmured Mr. Telford, in supplement.

The sound penetrated to Colonel Vivian's dulled ear where he stood, almost as Vane had left him. He moved forward a few unsteady steps, and bent his forehead against the glass, looking out into the night. It seemed black with outer objects undistinguishable to him, but the old soldier's stalwart form cut against the light was the target for an unerring aim. A ball of fire rushed, a sharp report drowned the last chime of the hour, a bullet shivered the glass, fell heavily to the floor, shot through the heart, fell heavily to the floor.

The Old Year and the old man's life had gone out together.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 262.)

The Rival Brothers:  
OR,  
THE WRONGED WIFE'S HATE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,  
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL  
MYSTERY," ETC., ETC.



Psyche mirrors, and the thousand and one costly trifles ladies with more money than they know what to do with love to gather round them. It was, altogether, a perfect gem of a room, this boudoir of my Lady Landsdowne.

On a lounge under the window, in a charming morning toilet, half-buried in rosy cushions, lay my lady herself. A pretty woman, as you know already, blue-eyed, golden-haired and fair-skinned, with regular features, and an air that might have done credit to a princess royal. Fair-haired, blue-eyed and delicate-featured, a gentle delineation surely; but Lady Landsdowne would not have impressed you with the idea of gentleness. The fair face looked hard and haughty at the best; at the worst, as it was this morning, it looked sour, sullen, and almost fierce.

A little stand with the remains of an epicurean breakfast, stood at her elbow; the last new novel was in her hand, but she was not reading; she was listening—not in impatience, not in eagerness, but with a look of sullen determination about the thin, bitter lips and in the wicked blue eyes. What she listened for came at last. There was a tap at the door, and her French maid entered, dipping and snuffing.

"A gentleman was below, and wished to see me, madam. He did not send his name, but said he came on important business. Oh, mon Dieu! here he was!"

Sure enough, there he was, at mademoiselle's elbow—a tall gentleman, with a handsome bronzed face, jet-black beard and mustache, dark-bright eyes, and the air generally of an Italian brigand.

"Your mistress will see me," said this dark apparition; "have the goodness to go, mademoiselle!"

Mademoiselle looked at her mistress, aghast. My lady had risen to a sitting position and waved her off with her jeweled hand. She seemed very little surprised or startled by this strange visitor; she had turned pale, it is true, and mademoiselle noticed it was like the gray pallor of death; but that was all. Her glittering eyes were fixed on his face as he came in and closed the door, and she was the first to speak, clearly and steadily.

"So you have come," she said; "sooner or later I knew you would!"

"I have come," said the deep voice of Senor Mendez, standing before her, dark and stern as Radamanthus. "I have come to seal your fate! Murderess, matricide, bigamist, your career is run. I come as an avenger, to lead you to your doom!"

A strange mode of saluting a great lady in her own house! But Lady Landsdowne only looked up in his face with a smile that showed all her glistening white teeth.

"Will you not take a seat, Mr. Hazelwood?" she said, in her sweetest tone, "or perhaps you prefer to stand. That tragic speech would bring down the house if you were in Drury Lane, or in the Bowers, in your own delightful land over the sea! Did you expect me to faint at sight of you, this morning, Conway?"

He looked at her in amazement. Bold and daring as he knew her to be, he was hardly prepared for such hardihood, for such brazen effrontery as this. She broke into a derisive little laugh as she watched him.

"Even so, Mr. Hazelwood! Strange to say, I fear you no more to-day than I did sixteen years ago, when I poisoned your pretty bride, got your brother hanged, broke your father's heart, and sent you a wanderer over the world. Oh, no! I am not afraid of you, Conway; I never was afraid of any thing or any one in my life, and I am not likely to begin now."

"You are the devil himself, I believe," said Mr. Hazelwood; "but if you were ten times the incarnate demon you are, your race is run, your power to do evil is ended. For stone walls, a treadmill, or a strait-jacket have rendered harmless worse fiends than you."

Again she laughed her low, mocking, derisive laugh. The woman seemed to be scarcely human in her daring fearlessness; and it was no mock courage, you could see; some secret sense of power suspended and lifted her above all fear.

"Justice, though the heavens fall! Is that your relentless motto, Mr. Hazelwood? Well, I have reason to be thankful to you for the sixteen years' grace you have given me! You see I have not wasted my time—I have gained wealth, rank, title, position. I have drunk the wine of life hot and sweet, and now that I have got to the less I find them rather bitter and palling to the taste. I am getting blasé, Mr. Hazelwood, and even the treadmill may be pleasant by way of change! How has the world gone with you these sixteen long years, my dear husband?"

"Woman! woman! is no spark of human nature left in your black and murderous heart, that you can talk like this! It matters not to you where I have been—I have known where you were this many a day, and I spared you. You had entrapped a good and honorable man into marriage by your devilish wiles; and for his sake, though he was a stranger to me, I spared you. You were a double, a treble murderer. You had ruined my life, made me a wanderer and an outcast, but still I spared you. And, fiend that you are, I would have spared you to the last—I would have left you to the Great Avenger of all wrongs, but for this last, cruellest deed of all. The shameful and inhuman deed committed last night!"

"Committed last night! Oh, you mean turning that girl out of doors! Why, Mr. Hazelwood, reflect—I come home and find a young and pretty woman domiciled with my husband, a young and handsome man, and—"

"Silence!" he thundered, raising his voice, for the first time, and with a flash from his dark eyes, that made even the female fiend before him cower. "Silence, or I will forget I am a man, and strangle you where you sit! Wretch, Jezebel, fiendless! You know as well as I do, that girl is your own daughter!"

Lady Landsdowne, stretched out her hand for a jeweled fan on the table, and began fanning herself.

"Mr. Hazelwood, oblige me by not shouting out in that manner! It's extremely ill-bred, and you'll have every servant in the house here to see what is the matter. Suppose she is my daughter—what then? It only makes the matter worse! I don't want her here—your stole her from me when a child—you thought I wasn't the proper sort of person to bring up your daughter, and you have kept her ever since. I didn't care much for her then—I care a great deal less now! I knew perfectly well, from the first moment I saw her, who she was—and a rare start she gave me, I assure you, for my nerves are not at all strong at times; but, as I said, I didn't want her here—so I turned her out! If it were to do over again, I would do it in half an hour—just the same!"

"I don't doubt it! You would murder your own mother if you took it into your head!"

"Yes, and if she ever comes troubling me here, I shall feel tempted to do it! Oh, you need not stare! I know she is in Monkswood,

and has the other one with her—I have seen them both, though she never saw me. I know more than you think, Mr. Hazelwood. I know how she stole Rosamond, and would have stolen Evangeline to spite you, if she could! Poor little wretch! a sweet life the one she did get must have led with her—half-starved all her days, I dare say!"

Conway Hazelwood stood looking at her, his dark face white as death.

"And this creature who sits there and says such things is human and a woman. Oh, in all this wide world does such another monster exist?"

She smiled up in his face and fluttered her pretty fan.

"You think me unique, then. I take it as a compliment! But if I am a monster and a murderess, and all the other sweet things you call me, whose conduct made me so, pray? I was the daughter of a New England innkeeper, a pretty, innocent barmaid, who used to fill the glasses of Captain Forrest and his fast young friends from New York, make their punch, and sit for them with such charming simplicity and such innocent blue eyes and long golden curls, until the blue eyes and golden curls turned Captain Forrest's head, and he made the pretty little bar-tender his pretty little wife!"

"Yes, when I was half-mad with your father's cursed liquor, and knew nothing of what I was doing. That was the one mad act that has ruined my whole life!"

"Very soon," Lady Landsdowne placidly went on, "Captain Forrest—an assumed name, but no matter—got tired of his artless little bride and deserted her. Her father died, and by and by came two little baby girls, with big black eyes and black curly hair—the very image of their papa. Papa found it out, relented, and came to see them, gave them money, and went away again. The ill-used wife waited, and waited, and at last, growing tired of that, began to act. She got money from him regularly. It enabled her to act all the better. She found out the reason of his absence—he was about to break the laws of his country and marry another wife, a richer and more presentable bride. She found out she was not Mrs. Forrest but Mrs. Hazelwood; but her husband was rich, and treacherous, and despised her. To add to it all, he stole her children from her one winter night, out of a poor and lonely house, in a lonely marsh, where she and her mother were stopping for a few days on their way to New York. That was the last drop in the cup; not that she cared much for the twins; they were only a burden and a torment to her; but the act galled her woman's nature. She resolved to be revenged, and in her own way. All that was savage within her—and Old Nick had always lain latent behind those innocent blue eyes and golden ringlets—rose fierce to the surface. She left her mother, secretly came to the city, obtained a situation as housemaid in the house of her husband's bride-elect, and laid her plans. It was she who wrote the notes to the bride and her lover; it was she who followed him down Broadway that memorable night dressed as a man. Had her trap laid for him succeeded, he might have been arrested for the murder; but he baffled her there. It was her hand administered the poison, hidden in a cup of coffee, and for which his brother died! Yes, she became a murderess! but whose was the first fault?"

"Yours, woman; for you entrapped me into a marriage I never would have thought of in my sober senses! Who can blame me for tiring of you! Why did you not come forward and proclaim the marriage, as you might have done? Mine alone was the fault; mine alone should have been the atonement. But, no, you were merciless, and now I shall be merciless to you! With the measure you have meted to others shall it this day be measured to you! The hour of retribution has come!"

"Has it? What are you going to do, Mr. Hazelwood?"

"I am going to summon Lord Landsdowne here and tell him your whole diabolical history. You entrapped him as you entrapped me. You have been his bane and the curse of his home, as you have been of mine! Then you shall enter a carriage that awaits you at the door, and I shall take you to the house where you are to drag out the rest of your wretched life."

"Might I ask where this house is?"

"It is an English madhouse! There in your stone prison, separated even from the unfortunate who will be your fellow-captives, you may learn in solitude to pray for pardon, and, perhaps, mercifully obtain forgiveness from Him who is more merciful than man; from Him who has said: 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall become white as wool.'"

"Thank you for your sermon! But suppose I do not believe in a future state; suppose I do not choose to pray—what am I to do then?"

"What you please! Your power to do harm will at least be ended. You should be thankful that your punishment is so slight!"

"Oh, I am—excessively! When am I to go?"

"Immediately! I am going to send for Lord Landsdowne now. You had better put on your bonnet and shawl, and be ready to accompany me in half an hour."

He rung the bell as he spoke, and my lady arose, with her cold, slight laugh:

"Short notice! But it is all poetical justice, I suppose. My bonnet and shawl are in my bed-chamber, you know. I shall beg you to excuse me while I put them on."

"Any attempt at escape will be useless," he said, sternly. "You shall not go out of my sight!"

"I shall not ask to. You may go in and examine the room. There is no door—no secret and mysterious trap-door, and the window is twenty feet from the ground. Go in and look yourself, if you do not believe me."

He did go in with her, and she watched him with her cold, evil eye as he examined the apartment. What she had said was true, and he left her carefully adjusting her shawl round her graceful shoulders, and went out again to the boudoir to answer a rap at the door. It was a servant come to reply to the call.

"Is his lordship in?" Mr. Hazelwood asked.

"Yes, sir; he is in the library."

"Ask him to have the kindness to come here at once, will you?"

The man bowed and disappeared. Mr. Hazelwood glanced into the inner room, but my lady was still busy before the glass. Five minutes passed, then Lord Landsdowne opened the door, staring with all his eyes at the stranger.

"Senor Mendez—you here! Where is her ladyship, and what—"

"My lord, come in," was the grave answer.

A quaking cry and a heavy fall in the next room. Both rushed in. Before her dressing-table, my lady lay flat on her face, writhing in dreadful convulsions. Conway Hazelwood lifted her up, and her face was an appalling

sight—blackened, convulsed, distorted, the lips foaming, the eyeballs starting. In one clenching hand she held convulsively grasped a vial, whose label told the whole story. The ghastly struggle lasted but for a moment. The blackened and horrible face turned livid, the awful deep rattle sounded through the room; the hand fell back; the eyeballs turned in their inflamed sockets; the jaw dropped, and her soul was gone! Rose Hazelwood—Lady Landsdowne—had gone to render an account of her dark and guilty life before the highest of all tribunals, and the two living husbands stood looking on the dead wife!

## CHAPTER XXV.

THE STORY TOLD IN THE DEATH-ROOM.

SILENCE and gloom were, for many a day, been the pervading characteristics of Black Monk's Priory; but a deeper silence, a more dismal gloom hung over it this serene summer day than the oldest servant of the house ever remembered before. With bated breath and noiseless step they stole from room to room, speaking in hushed whispers and with awestruck faces; for an awful visitor had entered unseen, unheard, unannounced. Death, grim and relentless, had been in their midst; and in one of the upper rooms, my lady lay cold and rigid, and lifeless. She had never been loved by one in the place. She was not regretted. There was not a living creature to drop a tear to the memory of the hard, cruel, haughty, overbearing mistress of Black Monk's; but its appalling suddenness stunned them. She had risen that morning in her usual health. She had eaten her breakfast with her accustomed appetite. She had not evinced the slightest symptom of the slightest indisposition, yet now she lay in her room a corpse. It was indeed enough to startle the most stolid among them; and, clustered together in the servants' hall, the tragic event was profoundly discussed in all its bearings. Mademoiselle Rosine, the French maid, deposed how the tall dark gentleman had followed her to the boudoir, had ordered her away, and how horribly pale my lady had turned at sight of him. Mademoiselle was of opinion that the dark gentleman was either his Satanic Majesty, or Death in bodily form; for no one had ever seen my lady alive after that.

The two rival village physicians had been sent for in great haste, but they must have come too late; for all their combined efforts could not kindle one spark of life in that cold breast. The old housekeeper was the only one among them who had seen her, and that excited their curiosity all the more. It was a crying shame, they all decided, that she alone should have the handling of the corpse and the *entree* of the death-chamber. Then there were other things to arouse their curiosity. The tall stranger whom William, the coachman, knew, and who was a foreign gentleman from Spain or Roosha, and was named Mendez, which he stopped at the Black Monk's Arms, along of another foreign gent, and was great up at Hazelwood, had taken his departure about noon; and the housekeeper, having arranged the corpse in its grave clothes, had been turned out of the room by my lord, who was watching by the dead alone. Then a little after sunset a carriage had driven up to the door, and the foreign gentleman had alighted with three ladies. Two of the ladies were evidently young, though their faces were hidden behind thick veils. The third was old, and ugly, and wrinkled, and bent, and poorly dressed, and was crying and moaning pitifully, and twisting her skinny old fingers, and wiping her bleared old eyes all the time she was in sight. The whole four had gone up-stairs to that room, and there they were now; and the assembly in the servants' hall could make neither top nor tail of the whole matter. Some inclined to differ from Mademoiselle Rosine in her view of the case, and were of the opinion that the foreign gentleman had murdered my lady in cold blood; and this dismal view of things was about agreed upon, between them, when the housekeeper came sweeping down upon them, and dispersed them about their business.

And how was it in that chamber of death—that chamber of horror! The gray and mystic twilight (the only light fitted for such a scene) stole drearily in through the closed curtains, lingering darkly in the corners, and brooding darkest of all in the corner where the bed was. A white sheet covered the bed, and under it there was the outline of a stark form in the marble rigidity of death. In an arm-chair, at the foot of the bed, but not near it, Lord Landsdowne sat, a little paler, a little graver than usual, but quiet and self-possessed. The first shock of horror had passed away. The brief explanation, which had shocked and horrified him more almost than the suicide had done, was past, too, and the worst that could come was over. There had been no love many a day—there could be no sorrow now. It was only ghastly and appalling to think of, and he wanted to forget it all as fast as possible; to go far from Black Monk's, and remember the last few years only as a hideous dream. Crouching at the head of the bed, rocking to and fro, moaning and crying, was the old woman; her hands clasped round her knees, and her dim old eyes fixed piteously on the bed. Yes, there was one human being to regret Lady Landsdowne—her wretched old mother. On a sofa by the window, clinging together, white and startled, two young girls sat; two so strangely alike that the resemblance might have been a-tonished you. The same wealth of jetty curls, the same brilliant black eyes, the same dark, clear complexion, the same regular features, the same high precisely, in all things the same but one—that one was in expression. One of the two had a strangely cowed and subdued look—a shrinking, frightened manner, the result of long years of hard treatment, and blows and abuse. Poor Rosamond Hazelwood! The whining old beldame beside the bed could have told a pitiable tale, if she chose, of the life she had led the granddaughter she stole.

One other person was in the room, walking up and down with restless steps. It was the foreign gentleman, who was telling, in the twilight, his dark and tragical tale.

"Yes, my lord," he was saying, "what I told you was all Heaven's truth. That dead woman was my wife and the mother of these girls; and I am no Cuban, no Senor Mendez, but Conway Hazelwood, and the rightful owner of the estate which my brother Arthur now holds. This old woman is the mother of her who bore the name of Lady Landsdowne."

"Yes, I'm her mother; her poor, forsaken, broken-hearted old mother," the old woman whispered; "and I never knew she was a great lady like this, or I would have come here long ago. Oh, dear! oh, dear! and now she's dead—and poisoned herself!"

"I have committed many a mad deed in my life," Mr. Hazelwood said, "but that marriage of mine was the crowning madness of all. With half a dozen hair-brained college friends I went to a New England village one summer, to fish and shoot, and we took it into our heads to go under assumed names. I took that of my mother's family, Forrest, and we stopped

at the village inn, kept by this old woman and her husband."

"Yes, yes, yes!" shrilly put in the old woman herself, "a lot of high-flyers, and Captain Forrest the worst of all—turning the silly heads of the girls, and drinking and carousing till all hours of the night. I warned Rose, but she always wanted to be a lady, and now she's dead! Oh, dear, dear, dear!"

"She was pretty, very pretty," Mr. Hazelwood went on, glancing slightly at the bed, "and I believed her as good and as innocent as she was beautiful. Still, in my sober senses I should never have married her, for I never really got beyond admiration of the fascinating little barmaid; but I was mad with liquor and altogether reckless when the thing was done. It was indeed marry in haste and repent at leisure with me; and before long I found out she was as corrupt of heart as fair of face. That settled the question. Much as my chains galled me, I might have been true to her but for that. I left her; perhaps I did wrong, but Heaven knows I had good cause. She did not know my real name; I hoped she never would. I sent her money plenty, and I never lost sight of her. When those children were born, I went back; but I found that living with her was an impossibility—I need not tell you, my lord, what she was: she has made your life a curse, as she has mine—and I left her again. Then came that other marriage I told you of this morning; Helen was gentle, and loving, and innocent; and I really loved her, as she did me, with her whole heart. I was wrong, I know; I knew it then, too, but more than love led me on. My pride, my honor, her happiness, all were at stake, and I would not pause. I resolved to provide amply for Rose; I knew that she loved money a thousand times more than she did me, and to take my children from her. She was no fit guardian for anything innocent; I laid my plans and succeeded. I placed the twin infants under my father's care; I sent her an ample supply of money, and flattered myself she would go her own way and let me go mine. My lord, how terribly I was mistaken, you know. What I have already told you, I will not repeat; it is not fitted for the ears that are listening now. It half maddens me yet to think of my bride, my brother, my father! To that father I told all before I fled from my native land, and that tale was his death-warrant. For years I was a wanderer, and the most miserable of men; I went to the East, and lost sight completely of America and all I had left behind. In Syria, I made the acquaintance of a Senor Mendez, a Cuban planter of immense wealth and failing health. He was an eccentric old man, with no near relatives; we became fast friends and traveling-companions; and at his death he left me all he possessed. I went to Cuba; my estate was a little paradise below; and for a few more years I spent a tranquil, idle, indolent, luxurious life. Then I grew tired of that, too; I came back to New York. There, under the name I had assumed with the estate, I found that I had fallen heir, long before, to Hazelwood, where my brother reigned in my place; that one of the twin infants I had left under my father's care, had been stolen shortly after, and had never been heard of since, and that the other was at school in Canada. I came to England before going to Canada; saw my brother and my cousin Una, without being recognized, made another tour of the continent, and went back. This time I did visit Canada. I had known the preceptress of the school in Cuba; I visited her, and saw Eve, and from that time I never lost sight of her. When she was sent for to come here, I came too, I accompanied her to Monkswood, and determined to remain and watch over her. The very evening of my arrival, as I stood talking to her at Hazelwood, a carriage passed us, and a lady looked from the window. I recognized the face instantly; it was one I had good reason to remember, though so many years had passed since I last beheld it—it was the face of the woman I thought dead—of Lady Landsdowne."

"I had met her in France," Lord Landsdowne said, helplessly, "four years before. She was nursery-governess in a family where I was visiting, and I don't know how it was, but her beauty, and her winning ways, and her sorrowful looks—"

"Oh, I understand it," Mr. Hazelwood said; "there never was a better actress. You married her as I did, and found out the difference. She did not see my face that evening; the first time she saw me was that stormy day at the village-inn, when the suddenness of the shock overcame even her iron nerves, and she shrieked and fainted. It was for your sake I spared her; I would have spared her to the end had she been merciful to her own child."

"Perhaps she did not recognize her," Lord Landsdowne said.

"She did recognize her; she told me so. She knew her from the first, and Rosamond and her mother too. By one of those strange freaks of fortune that astonish the world at times, this old woman had brought Rosamond to the Canadian village where Eve was at school. Eve was recognized by her grandmother as soon as seen; and Paul Schaffer found out the whole story from her by a bribe, and resolved to make use of it for his own ends. He was the open lover of Hazel Wood, and the secret lover of Eve; he was jealous of young D'Arville, and laid a plot, with the connivance of others, to frustrate his rival and compel Eve to marry him in spite of herself. Una Forest, who should have been Eve's protectress, joined with him against her. You see the resemblance Rose and her sister bear to each other. You could scarcely tell them apart yourself, my lord. Rose was compelled to meet Schaffer by night in the grounds of Hazelwood, and carefully trained in the part she was to play; D'Arville was brought out to witness the performance; the diabolical plot succeeded to perfection; he never for a moment dreamed it could be other than Eve; and in the first impulse of outraged pride and love, left Hazelwood, without one word of explanation or farewell. Next day, Eve was driven from Hazelwood by the abuse of Miss Forest, and you know how you and I found her. I resolved that she should remain here until her mother returned, and see if one spark of human nature lingered in her hard and vindictive heart. You know better than I do, my lord, the scene which followed. I met my daughter flying from this house, as she had fled from Hazelwood; and then, and not till then, I told her who I was. I took her to the inn where I stopped; I found out this woman and her child; I brought the three together, and told them the tale I have now told you. That was the first part of my task; my second was one of retribution. I felt no mercy, no compassion now for her who lies there dead. I came here this morning to exact justice to the uttermost farthing. You should have heard the tale before her, and the cell of a madhouse should have been her home for life, had she not taken her fate in her own hand. She expected me and was prepared; she believed in no future life, she was weary of this, and so—"

He stopped and stood looking at the bed. Lord Landsdowne followed his glance for an instant, and then turned away with a slight shudder.

"I shall leave this horrible place within a week. May I ask what is to be your next step?"

"Retribution still! The mercy that others have shown shall be shown unto them. Hazelwood is to be the next place I visit; and Paul Schaffer and Una Forest will find out the game is not all in their hands; that a power superior to theirs is at work. You must be there to witness the family re-union that is to take place. You have seen Eve's humiliation; you must also see her triumph."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 287.)

## Overland Kit:

THE IDYL OF WHITE PINE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN, AUTHOR OF "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," "WOLF DEMON," "WHITE WITCH," ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XIX.

THE MIDNIGHT EXAMINATION.

The window was still open, for Bernice had not closed it. She looked out upon the street. A little group of men came marching along, coming from the north.

As they came past the Eldorado, Bernice saw that Judge Jones was at the head of the party, and that in the center was Dick Talbot, evidently a prisoner.

A sigh of anguish came to the lips of the girl; her worst fears were realized. The express agent was on the right scent.

As the party passed the window, Talbot raised his eyes, and gazing in that direction, caught sight of the pale face of Bernice, framed in the light that streamed through the window, from the burning candle on the table beyond.

A sad smile came over his face as he looked upon the girl.

The party passed on, heading for the express office. A little group of people had come to the door of the Eldorado, attracted by the noise of the footsteps.

Among the party was Jimmie and Mr. Ren-

Bernice, leaning out of the window, caught sight of the old lawyer.

She called out to him aloud.

In obedience to her request, Mr. Ren-

net ascended to Bernice's room.

"You saw them pass?" Bernice questioned, eagerly, almost before the lawyer was fairly within the apartment.

"You mean the party that just went down the street?"

"Yes."

"Certainly."

"What is the matter?"

"Well, from what I can gather from the conversation of the men who stood around me, I should say that the Vigilantes had risen."

"Vigilantes!" questioned Bernice, in wonder; and then, at the very moment that she spoke, the thought flashed through her mind that Talbot, at his interview with her, had spoken of danger to him, coming from the hands of the Vigilantes.

"Yes; the old-time Vigilance Committee, under a new name, my dear," explained the lawyer. "You see, they don't have much law in this region—none of the machinery of courts, judges, lawyers, etc.; so, once in a while the citizens take the law into their own hands, and that, my dear, is the Vigilantes."

"But what are they going to do with Mr. Talbot?" questioned Bernice, earnestly.

"Mr. Talbot?" said Renmet, in astonishment; he had entirely forgotten the name of Dick Talbot.

"Yes; the gentleman in the middle of the group of men, who seemed to be a prisoner. He's the one, Mr. Renmet, who gave up his room to me; don't you remember?"

"Oh, yes; bless me! I forgot all about it!" exclaimed the old lawyer. "Well, no one seems to have the least idea why this Mr. Talbot is arrested—everybody calls him Injun Dick, my dear. By-the-by, that's the reason why I didn't understand who you meant."

"Where are they taking him?"

"To the express office down the street; they're going to try him right away, so one of the crowd said."

"Mr. Renmet, I feel a great curiosity to know of what crime he is accused. He very kindly gave up his room to me, you know," Bernice said, suddenly. "Would it be requesting too much to ask you to go and see what is the matter?"

"Oh, of course not, my dear," Renmet replied, rather astonished at the odd request. "I'll go at once, but the trial may take some time, and it's late now, and—"

"I shall be up—I'm not at all sleepy!" interrupted Bernice, quickly.

"Well, I'll be back as soon as possible," and the old gentleman hurried from the room, wondering at the peculiar whims of "lovely woman."

Down the street to the express office hurried the lawyer. It was only a few hundred yards, and when Renmet arrived there, he found that they had just got the office lighted up by means of a number of candles stuck around the walls of the shanty in tin scones, and were proceeding to open the door.

The Judge took a seat behind the table; Talbot, the prisoner, was placed behind a dry-goods box; and the crowd ranged themselves around the room.

The little office was pretty well crowded, for the party that held Injun Dick prisoner, had increased, little by little, on the road from Gopher Gulch to the express office in Spur City.

"As this is merely a preliminary examination we don't need any jury," said Judge Jones, with this remark opening the court.

"Prisoner at the bar, known as Dick Talbot, otherwise Injun Dick, are you guilty, or not guilty?"

"Well, Judge, until I know what I'm accused of, I can't tell; I never could guess riddles. You're too much for me; I give it up, Judge," replied Dick, coolly, not at all abashed by his position.

A titter went round the circle of miners at the reply. Probably no class of men in the world are quicker to appreciate a certain sort of humor than the denizens of the Far West.

The Judge looked annoyed for a moment.

"I put the question directly to you to save time," he said sternly; "you must know very well of what crime you are accused, Dick Talbot."

"Haven't the least idea, Judge; unless it is in being Dick Talbot. I'll have to plead guilty to that, anyhow."

"Gambler, bully, cheat, and desperado!" exclaimed the Judge, harshly.

The face of Talbot grew a shade paler at the



ugly names; he shut his teeth firmly together for a moment, involuntarily his hands clenched, and an ominous light shot from his dark eyes.

All within the room bent forward eagerly to watch the issue. Few there but had seen men, giants in size, go down before Injun Dick's sledge-hammer blows, for far less offense than that now offered him.

Nearly all the crowd expected to see Dick dart forward and fend the Judge to the floor; and one half of those within the room would have justified the deed.

Neither they, nor Dick, had any suspicion that Judge Jones had slyly drawn a revolver from the drawer of the table, when he had first taken his seat at it, and now, with his hand upon the trigger, the hammer cocked, he waited for the attack, which he had fully calculated his words would bring.

Of course, in self-defense, the Judge thought, and rightly too, that few would blame him for using his weapon.

But Judge Jones had reckoned "without the host."

With a powerful effort, Dick repressed his wrath.

"Judge, when a man stands before you with his hands tied behind his back, to strike him, even with words, is a cowardly act," Dick said, slowly and deliberately.

A low murmur came from the lips of the crowd. It was plain that the prisoner had more friends than the Judge.

"And now, Judge, let's have a good, fair, square slug of hands; no cards up your sleeve, or axes rung in on a 'cold deal,' continued Dick, in the same cool, deliberate way.

"What are you, anyway? Are you the Judge, sitting there to try me for some crime I am accused of committing, or are you the prosecuting attorney, whose business it is to prove me guilty if he can, whether I am so, or not, or are you both, rolled up into one? If you are, I'd like to know what kind of a show I'm going to get in this here court?"

"A show to be struck by lightning!" growled the man-from-Red-Dog, in anger.

"Silence in the court!" cried the Judge, sternly, and in anger. "In reply to your accusations, I will say that I am the Judge, and not the prosecuting attorney, but it is my duty to see that justice be done."

"That's all I ask," remarked Dick, quietly.

"Of course you are aware that, in certain cases, the Judge, on the guilt of the prisoner being proven, has power to pass sentence at once," Jones said.

"That's square, every time; but I say, Judge: you commenced operations by saying that, as this was only a preliminary examination, a jury wouldn't be needed. Now, if you're going to have a jury, they've got to find me guilty before you can sentence me. And if the crime I'm accused of isn't big enough to go before a jury, why of course the punishment will only amount to a fine. So you can't propel right away with your jury-teams; if I've done anything wrong according to law, I'm ready to pony up for it, and if I haven't got money enough about me, maybe some friend of mine in the crowd will 'put up' for me."

"I'm your antelope!" yelled the man-from-Red-Dog, shaking a canvas bag of gold dust excitedly in the air, and dancing, first on one leg, and then on the other, like a turkey on a hot plate.

"I'll see you through if it busts me. I'm the big cinnamon bar from Red Dog, I am!"

"Somebody put that fool out!" ejaculated the Judge, sharply.

"Have you picked out the spot where you want that 'somebody' buried?" asked the Red-Dog, sarcastically. "Or hadn't you better 'go for me' yourself? If I hit you out, the damned old express company would want another agent at Spur City, you bet!"

## CHAPTER XX.

## A HITCH IN THE PROCEEDINGS.

"ORDER! order!" murmured some of the partisans of the Judge, scattered among the crowd.

"Who's a sayin' any thing ag'in' order?" demanded the giant, looking about him, as if with intent to get his eyes on one of the speakers and inaugurate a free fight, there and then.

"Is this a good square trial, or ain't it? Have you got the 'papers' packed on us, an' things fixed, so that my pard thar ain't goin' to have no sight for his money, say?" and the man-from-Red-Dog looked indignant.

"That big cuss thar, that's tryin' to boss this job, stuck his pick into my 'lead' without my sayin' any word to him. I don't allow that any man from hyer to Auston, big or little, Injun or white, kin call me a fool, without havin' to peel an' fight for it. I'm any man's antelope in a free fight, an' all I ask is a fair shake, you bet!"

"Order must be preserved, or the examination cannot go on," said the Judge, in a quiet way; he already saw that he had proceeded on the wrong track.

"That's so!" ejaculated Dandy Jim. "I never say any word ag'in' it. I only offered for to see Dick through if he needed rocks. I stand ready for to put the first man out myself, ef he's as big as the side of a house, who ills things hyer."

"That is perfectly satisfactory," said Jones, evidently desirous of calming the troubled waters that threatened to overwhelm the impromptu court of justice.

"I was rather hasty, perhaps, in the use of the expression, which I addressed really more to the whole crowd than to any one man in it; and, I suppose it is as well that I should state right here that I recall the offensive word, and trust that it will be overlooked."

"That's square!" exclaimed the gentleman from Red Dog. "I don't knock any chip off any man's shoulder, unless he puts it there to be knocked off. Your 'pology' is accepted, Judge. I'm willin' to be forgiven, an' ef I've done anything I ought to be sorry for, I'm glad of it." And with this jocosely remark, peace was once more restored, and the examination went on.

Jones saw plainly that Dick had made up his mind to take the affair coolly, and not to be provoked into any violence. The Judge felt that he had lost the first point in the game, and that his adversary had the best of it at present.

"The charge against you, Talbot, is a very serious one," the Judge said, slowly; "too serious for me to handle alone. I don't want to assume any responsibility beyond what the citizens here have already conferred upon me. As your life or death will hang in the issue of this trial, I shall summon a jury of twelve men, good and true, and place your fate in their hands."

The members of the crowd looked at each other, rather astonished at the words of the Judge. Mechanically, each man put the question to himself: "Of what crime was Injun Dick accused?"

"You will have a fair, square trial before a jury of your fellow-citizens here; your fate will be in their hands, not in mine," continued the Judge. "I make this remark, because, by your

words, you seemed to insinuate that I was acting unduly against you. Now, I am not aware of any reason existing why I should have a spite against you; do you know of any?"

"No," Dick replied, promptly; "but, Judge, in this world, a man ain't always able to tell his friends from his enemies. You may have some secret spite against me that I don't know any thing about. I don't say that you have; I don't know any reason why you should have; I never trod on your toes 'in any way that I'm aware of. But, as I said before, a man can't always tell. When the ship is on the ocean, it isn't the rock that rises above the water that's dangerous; it's the one beneath the surface, that the waters hide. Just so in life. I never yet feared, or turned my back on an open enemy. I was always prepared for him; ready, willing to meet him. It's the man that strikes you in the back that's ugly—the fellow who hasn't the courage to say: 'I've got a grudge against you, look out for me.'"

"Very true; but I think you, as well as everybody else here, ought to be fully satisfied that I haven't anything against you. I'm aware that these remarks of mine are a little out of place, but when a man's character is attacked, and his motives questioned, he had better settle the matter right off at once," Jones said, striving to appear as just as possible.

"We're convened in this room, fellow-citizens, to carry out the spirit of the law; what does it matter if we don't conform to the strict letter of it? We're after justice, that's the main point. We're far off here from civilization; we haven't got the regular machinery to work out the process of law as they have it in the East in the big cities. But, what do we care for that? As I said before, we're after justice, and law ain't always justice. I intend that this man shall have a fair trial. Twelve honest men, selected by yourselves, fellow-citizens, shall decide according to the evidence whether he's guilty or not guilty. As for myself, I'm going to lay down the law just as honestly and fairly as I know how. If I don't, when I step out of this court to the street outside, I become a private citizen again, and answerable to any one of you for my acts."

A murmur of applause went round among the crowd. What fair man could take exception to the Judge's speech?

"And now we'll commence proceedings," said Jones, after the slight noise had subsided. "Dick Talbot, you do not know, then, the nature of the charge under which you have been arrested?"

Dick shook his head silently in the negative.

"You are accused of stopping the express coaches on the highway between here and Auston, and by force of arms, assisted by armed confederates, robbing said coaches, and the passengers in the aforesaid coaches, of their money and other valuables."

Nearly all within the room started in surprise, and loud murmurs of astonishment and doubt came from the lips of the miners. Such a charge, coupled with the name of Dick Talbot, seemed to them utterly preposterous.

As for Talbot himself, he seemed to be the most thoroughly astonished person in the room.

"Why, Judge?" he exclaimed, "somebody's been puttin' up an awful job to humbug you!"

"You deny the charge?" questioned Judge Jones, fixing his cold, gray eyes on the face of Talbot.

"Of course I do! You might as well accuse me of trying to steal the moon."

"You deny that you are the road-agent known as Overland Kit?"

"If a bomb-shell had burst in that little shanty it couldn't have caused more astonishment than the question put by Judge Jones to the prisoner."

The members of the crowd stared at each other with open mouths.

"Overland Kit!" cried Talbot, amazed; "what, if?"

"Yes; are you not the notorious desperado?"

"Well, Judge, I'd like to see you prove it," Dick replied, with an air of conscious innocence.

"That I will speedily do," said the Judge, confidently. "Step forward, Joseph Rain."

That worthy instantly emerged from the crowd and advanced to the side of the table.

"This is the first witness," said the Judge. "Witness, look at the prisoner. Can you tell me—"

"I beg your pardon," interrupted Renmet, who looked upon the whole affair as a perfect farce, and the charge as too ridiculous to think credibly, for an instant; "but, Judge, it is customary to swear a witness before he gives his testimony; otherwise, how can you tell whether the man is speaking truth or falsehood? You can't, legally, jeopardize a man's life upon the mere word, unsupported by oath, of another."

"That's so, boss!" ejaculated Ginger Bill.

"You bet!" cried the man-from-Red-Dog, the expression "sort of clinching" the remark of the other, as a miner observed.

"Squar," said another of the miners, and various remarks of a like tenor came from others of the crowd.

Judge Jones knitted his brow; he did not like the interruption, but his own good sense told him that the point was well taken.

"Has any one in the room a Bible?" Jones asked, after a moment's pause.

The miners looked at each other in doubt.

If Judge Jones had asked for a pack of cards a dozen in the room could have accommodated him at once.

"Hasn't any gentleman got a Bible?" repeated the Judge, beginning to foresee a serious delay.

"Reckon thar ain't one 'round, Judge," one of the miners said, shaking his head in doubt.

"A Testament will sign of another."

Again the members of the crowd looked at each other with blank faces.

"Reckon thar ain't any sich thing in this crowd," Jim remarked.

"Don't believe that thar's sich a thing in town," Ginger Bill observed, dubiously.

"Well, in the absence of the article whereon the oath should be taken, we must swear the witness on his conscience," said the Judge, seeing a way out of the dilemma.

## False Faces:

## THE MAN WITHOUT A NAME.

## A MYSTERY OF THE GREAT METROPOLIS.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "A LIVING LIE," "SNARED BY DEATH," "BERNAL OLYDIE," "ELMA'S CAPTIVITY," "STELLA, A STAR."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

## WHIPPING-POST AND PRISON.

"WHEN Chester here came to me seeking my services in your case, (for I had adopted the profession of detective as one affording the excitement congenial to my mind,) and stated the facts, I knew that I had found what I had been so long seeking," continued Ray.

"And yet you excited no suspicion in my mind that you were concerned in the facts I so related," said Chester.

Ray smiled.

"Of course not, my boy. I did not wish to say any thing until I had thoroughly satisfied myself," he replied. "When you took me to the office and introduced me to Mr. Peter Shaw, I felt that I was right in my surmise; but I still concluded to hold my peace until I had worked out the case to a happy termination. Our female friend—what do you call her?"

"Almira Plummer."

"She bothered me a little by guessing who I was. I had no idea that she was a woman then. I thought she was a strange sort of a man, but the knowledge of her true sex explains all the strangeness away. I can understand her action now. She urged me to reveal myself to you, but I was still resolved to catch this Edgar Skelmersdale and his gang first."

"Yes; after their attempt at assassination here they abandoned this section, and crossed over to Jersey. Vengeance was their object now; plunder was their object where they went. They did not know that I was on their track. They still kept ahead of me, but I tracked them to Wilmington, Delaware."

"So far! What could have taken them there?"

"A robbery, which they planned with all the shrewdness and cunning which characterize their organization. Masked in their false faces, they burst suddenly into the cashier's house, surprising him in the midst of his family. Their intention was to handcuff him, and demand the keys of the bank-vaults."

"A daring scheme!"

"But not successfully worked out. At the time the False Faces entered the room there were more parties present than they had anticipated, and the game they were attempting to play became consequently all the more perplexing. Consternation followed the appearance of the robbers in those strange faces, which, while bearing a human semblance, were as impassive as the face of a corpse. The women screamed, and one fainted dead upon the floor. The cashier was handcuffed, though he made a gallant resistance. The cries of the women, their wild efforts to escape, the struggles of the cashier in his manly endeavors to free himself, raised an alarm, and the robbers were obliged to retreat without obtaining the keys of the bank-vaults. I and my friends arrived in the town the next morning. We heard the story and knew that they were the party we were in search of. We joined in the pursuit and, I make no boast in saying it, for our aid and advice the whole party were captured."

"How many were there?"

"There were seven in all when we came up with them, but we only carried five into Newcastle."

"What became of the other two?"

"We left them dead in the wood where we overtook them. Though surprised, they made a desperate resistance, and two were killed in the struggle to overpower them."

"Was Edgar Skelmersdale killed?" inquired Bartyne, quickly.

"No; we took him and the lawyer, Selkreg, and Doctor Watervliet alive, and they are now in Newcastle jail awaiting their trial."

"Then a just punishment will be awarded to them."

"Undoubtedly. Were they here in New York they might find some loophole of escape, but there it is impossible. Justice must be dealt out to them there to the full penalty of the law. You can now rest in peace."

"I hope so; but, Raymond, I have a strong desire to be present at the trial and hear the sentence."

"Very good, sir. I shall have to attend to give some evidence, and you can go with me."

Raymond Bartyne, to give him his true name, took up his quarters at the house in Eighth street after that night.

At his father's request he gave up his profession of detective, and took an interest in his business at the office.

Genni Bartyne's idea was to leave the New York office in the charge of Raymond and Chester and return himself to the Bartyne wells.

He had several objects in view, all depending upon Almira's recovery. As soon as she was able to travel, he intended to take her, Etta, Kate and Raymond to the wells, and then make definite arrangements for the future.

He had surprises in store for all of them, and he smiled in anticipation as he reflected over them.

In the mean while he should have the opportunity to witness the trial of the False Faces.

It was not from any spirit of revenge that Genni Bartyne wished to hear the final doom pronounced upon the man who had so deeply wronged him, but to feel satisfied that his power of injury was destroyed or rendered nugatory.

Being apprised of the day appointed for the trial, Genni Bartyne and Raymond went to Newcastle, the county-town of the county of the same name; therefore the trial was held there, the city where the crime was committed being in the same county.

The trial was held on the nineteenth of November and lasted until the fifth day of December.

The prisoners were all convicted and sentenced, first to receive forty lashes at the whipping-post, and then to be imprisoned for ten years.

The whipping-post is an old-time mode of punishment, peculiar alone to the State of Delaware. In no other State in the Union, that I am aware of, is this method of punishment retained.

Edgar Skelmersdale's cheek paled as he listened to his sentence. The term of imprisonment he did not heed, though it would take the ten best years of his life from him; but the moral degradation of a public whipping was the keenest torture that could be inflicted upon his proud spirit.

The presence of Genni Bartyne and his son, at that hour, added to the bitter sense of gall and humiliation that he felt.

He knew that Bartyne had found his son, for, when Raymond testified, he said: "My name is Raymond Bartyne, but I have been known in the force only by the name of Frank Ray."

And Raymond knew that Skelmersdale had slain his mother, for the story of the tragedy at French Creek had been related to him by his father, and he exulted over the sentence pronounced upon her murderer.

"Had I known what I know now," he told his father, "there would have been three dead bodies left in the wood instead of two, and the third would have been that of Edgar Skelmersdale!"

Raymond persuaded his father to remain and witness the whipping to be inflicted upon Edgar.

They formed part of the throng around the whipping-post. The forty lashes were duly inflicted, and then the culprits were placed in the pillory for one hour, there to endure the gibes and mockery of the rabble of half-grown boys and little men.

When the hour expired they were taken to the jail.

Genni Bartyne and Raymond returned to New York. Preparations were at once commenced for the visit to the oil wells, Almira being now nearly recovered from her wound.

The party, consisting of Bartyne, Almira, Etta, Kate and Raymond took their departure, Chester going with them to the ferry, and exchanging a tender farewell with Etta.

Kate was very jubilant, as Raymond devoted himself to her and Etta, and she felt confident that he liked her. As for herself, she was as deep in love with him as she could be; and her love made her black eyes sparkle with an unusual brilliancy.

They were all very happy. There had been storms in the past for all of them, but the clouds appeared to have passed away, and the sun of happiness shone radiantly forth.

This sunny calm was deceptive. The False Faces were not done with them yet. They were to be permitted to strike another blow of vengeance.

Grave suspicions were entertained by many of the inhabitants of Newcastle that the little county jail could not long contain these desperate men.

The inferences that led to this conviction were the facts that those within the walls were only a few of a formidable band living with out, and that the prison itself was not the structure that it should be, and several of the robbers in the cells were well-known jail-breakers.

In a short time, however, the sensation of the attempted bank robbery, the long trial, and the whipping-post, gradually wore away. The affair ceased to become common conversation, while the submissive and gentle conduct of the prisoners gradually destroyed the suspicion and led the people to feel that the jail was strong and the culprits baffled.

Edgar Skelmersdale, despite his vicious nature, had one firm, fast friend, who had clung faithfully to him through all these changing years.

That friend was a woman—a woman whose yellowish complexion, curly black hair, and blue-black eyes, made people in the North think she was a foreigner; yet she was native born. In the South they know this class of females well; they call them quadroons; one-fourth black.

In Texas, when he fled with the blood of Jane Bartyne upon his hands, he first had met her, a girl then, and found shelter in her father's cabin. After her father's death she had followed him, dressed in male attire, a faithful servant.

She was the spy of the False Faces, appearing as occasion required either in male or female attire.

She had been called Eldora, a fanciful name given by her mother.

Her father was a "poor white," as they are called, whose name was Boyd.

This woman was known in the band as Dora Boyd. She was tall for a woman, well-formed, and had a handsome, though somewhat fierce face.

When dressed as a man she would be readily taken for a Cuban or Spaniard, or Italian; but it was as a woman, modestly and plainly attired, that she made her appearance in Newcastle.

She inquired for a family named Jefferson, the members of which were very rich and respectable. After she had been informed where the Jefferson family resided, her informant noticed that she did not go directly in the way pointed out, but strolled indifferently through the town.

She left Newcastle, and returned again.

This time she inquired for the residence of another well-known family, named Carew, but as before it was observed that she did not go to the quarter of the town where the Carews resided.

This fair and mysterious woman eventually took up her lodgings in a little cabin in the outskirts of the village inhabited by negroes.

No suspicion was excited by her movements, no one seemed to think that she had any particular mission in Newcastle.

A short time after she sought shelter in this secluded cabin, a negro came to the jail and asked permission to see a prisoner. She was allowed to enter.

She saw the prisoner she had asked for, and she also saw Edgar Skelmersdale, and placed in his hands a letter from Dora Boyd, telling him to be of good heart and not to despond, because she was working steadily for his and his companions' freedom and release.

Dora Boyd did not reside all the time in the negro's cabin, but traveled between Philadelphia and Newcastle frequently.

Many letters were transmitted to Edgar Skelmersdale by the hands of the negroes. Their contents consisted of warm assurances of help, of sincere wishes, and told him to have courage and hope.

The hour of deliverance drew near.

One afternoon a small steam-tug came up the Delaware and cast anchor at a convenient point near the jail, just off the opposite bank.

In the mean time the mysterious woman had disappeared, and there seemed to be no relation between her visits and the presence of the tug.

Evening closed upon the river, the tug and the prison, and in the darkness all things grew indistinct.

Nothing disturbed the order of the prison or the repose of the town until one o'clock in the morning.

There was no guard about the jail except the night warden. Shortly after the clock struck one he heard a knock in the back yard upon the door which connected the latter with the prison proper.

Not suspecting anything wrong he opened the door and looked out.

The instant he did so he was fiercely grasped. He saw the muffled figures of what he supposed to be four men; he heard low mutter-

ings and hurried whispers, and the instant after, without the opportunity to raise a cry, he was hurled to the ground, a strong hand clutching his throat, a glittering dagger flashed before his eyes, and then his keen point was held against his breast, over his heart.

"One cry, one whisper, one breath louder than we alone can hear, and you are a dead man!"

It appeared to him that these words came from a woman's throat, but the threat was none the less portentous.

The next moment he was gagged, handcuffed and leg-ironed. The prison keys were taken from him. Two men guarded him, knife in hand, while the other two with the keys went to the cells of the False Faces and released them. They visited no other cells in all the prison save these.

Edgar Skelmersdale clasped the disguised woman in his arms, when he comes from his cell, for he is the first to be liberated.

"My brave Dora! well done!" he cries. "And she feels rewarded for what she has done."

Then the others are released one by one. All are earnest in their praises of the courageous woman who has brought their comrades to the rescue.

They assemble in the corridor of the prison and hurriedly whisper among themselves.

No one has detected them thus far, and no one knows of their freedom, save the night warden, lying out in the yard, gagged, handcuffed and leg-ironed.

They pass out to the place where he lies. They fear that he may be found, or that he may free himself before they are far enough away, and they excitedly debate what they shall do with him.

"Dead men tell no tales," whispers one, and, without pausing for their answer, he bends upon his knee, and raises his knife to strike.

Dora catches his arm, stays the descending blow, and pulls him away from the prostrate man.

"Never shed blood when it can be avoided. Besides, it is a cowardly act to strike one so helpless," she cries, upbraidingly.

"She is right," says Skelmersdale. "That settles it; the warden's life is saved."

"We must put him out of sight somewhere!"

This suggestion comes from Cebra Selkreg, and they all agree with it.

But where? They are at a loss.

"Carry him to the cells," prompts Doctor Watervliet.

They take up the helpless warden in their arms. They descend the stone steps leading cellarward, and place their burden on the floor.

The e is a large heap of coal lying near, and that suggests another idea to Cebra Selkreg. He gives utterance to it, and they approve and adopt it.

They roll the warden over upon his face and pile a mass of coals upon his back and shoulders. The position of the poor man is thus rendered utterly and absolutely helpless.



## HE NEVER TOLD A LIE.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

I saw him standing in the crowd,  
A comely youth and fair;  
There was a brightness in his eye,  
A glory in his hair.

I saw his comrades gaze on him,  
His comrades standing by,  
I heard them whisper each to each—  
"He never told a lie."

I looked in wonder on that boy  
As he stood there so young,  
To think that never an untruth  
Was uttered by his tongue.

I thought of all the boys I'd known—  
Myself among the fry—  
And knew of none that one could say  
"He never told a lie."

I gazed upon that youth with awe  
That did enchain me long,  
I had not seen a boy before  
So perfect and so strong.

And, with a something of regret,  
I wished that he was I,  
So they might look at me and say—  
"He never told a lie."

I thought of questions very hard  
For boys to answer right;  
How did you tear those pantalones?  
My son, what caused the fight?

Who left the gate ajar last night?  
Who bit the pumpkin pie?  
What boy could answer all of these  
And never tell a lie?

I proudly took him by the hand,  
My words with praise were rife,  
I blessed that boy who never told  
A falsehood in his life.

I told him I was proud of him:  
A fellow standing by  
Informed me that that boy was dumb  
Who'd never told a lie.

## LEAVES

## From a Lawyer's Life.

BY A. GOULD PENN.

## V.—Cell Number Nine.

"THE Commonwealth against Jack Daring, indicted for horse-stealing," called out the prosecutor in court one morning, in response to the judge's demand for the next trial case.

"Let the prisoner be brought in, Mr. Sheriff," commanded the judge.

Accordingly a deputy soon appeared, followed by the prisoner, heavily ironed, and he was placed in the dock.

This was the notorious Jack Daring, one of the most famous and successful horse-thieves known in our country. Long had he plied his nefarious calling, and by his cunning escaped the just punishment for his crimes, but now he was secured at last.

Jack Daring was no ordinary criminal. As he took his place in the prisoner's dock, I was strangely impressed by his appearance and demeanor. He was a man of medium height, with a clear, intelligent eye, and a face handsome as a picture, and in his manner was none of the cringing, guilty aspect usually worn by men of his calling. A perfect gentleman in dress and manner, and no one would have supposed him to be merely a sharp horse-thief.

While taking a mental measurement of Jack Daring, my pleasing impressions were increased by his very intelligent answers to the questions asked him by His Honor.

"Whom have you chosen as your counsel?" asked the judge.

"I have made no choice, your Honor," urbanely replied the prisoner.

"Have you any means with which to pay an attorney for defending you?"

"I have not."

"Mr. Smith, the court will appoint you as counsel for this prisoner," said the judge, in his business-like way.

This was the recognized custom in our court, to appoint counsel for indigent prisoners, and it was considered disgraceful and unprofessional for an attorney to solicit of a prisoner the unenviable task of conducting his defense.

Hence I was not altogether pleased at being selected for this case, for I knew that it would be a task that would reflect but little credit upon an attorney; but even the vilest wretch is entitled to legal assistance, and my path of duty was clear.

I accordingly conducted Jack Daring, still in irons, into a consultation-room for conference.

I found him to be a man of unusual intelligence, and even well read, but could get from him no intimation of guilt, as he stoutly maintained his innocence of the charge.

"But, my dear sir," I asked, "how do you propose to establish your innocence?"

"Not by producing testimony to clear me," he answered, giving me a knowing wink which left me in doubt as to his real intentions.

"Then pray tell me how?" I demanded.

"Easily enough, Mr. Smith," he answered; "the jury will agree to disagree."

"How do you know that?"

"Jack Daring has been here before," he replied; "there are men in the court-room, and even now on the jury, who would not dare convict Jack Daring."

"More bravado, I thought; but, as if reading my thoughts, he exclaimed:

"You doubt my statement, Mr. Smith?"

I stared at the rascal in astonishment.

"Of course I do," I replied; "but if you rely on such chances, I am afraid they will be a frail support."

"I will assume the risk," said Daring.

So we returned into court, and the trial was commenced.

A jury was obtained composed mostly of well-known and reliable farmers—men who, of all others, are least inclined to favor the purloiners of horseflesh. I saw in this no hope for my confident client, but he seemed as calm and indifferent as though he was a mere spectator.

The testimony for the prosecution was ample of its kind, and, to my mind, left no chance for a verdict of Not Guilty.

As in duty bound, I instituted a rigid cross-examination of the witnesses, but found very few inaccuracies of statement, and literally nothing of a doubt to favor my client.

The arguments were lengthy on both sides, and the day was about finished when the jury retired for consultation. The prisoner was conducted back to his cell for the night, and the court adjourned until such time as the jury should report.

I returned to my little office in the evening, where I found my student, Lewis Ayres, waiting for my appearance. I saw by his looks that he had something to communicate.

"What's up, Lew?" I asked.

"A message from Sheriff Lee, sir, saying that Jack Daring wished to consult with you this evening."

"Heard from the jury, Lew? Any verdict yet?"

"No, sir; but it is rumored that they have disagreed, and will stay out all night."

"So, so! Well, I'll go up to the jail and hear what Daring has to say."

So saying, I left the office, and wended my way to the prison.

In answer to my ring, the old jailer opened the door, and when I stated my errand, he bade me enter. It was only by peering closely into my face that he recognized me, as he was near-sighted, and the dusk of evening prevented him knowing me at ordinary distance.

"All right, Mr. Smith; all right. This way, please," and taking down the huge keys, he led the way to the jail hall, and admitted me, following to unlock the door of Cell No. 9, which done, he retired, and I was left alone in the cell with Jack Daring.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Smith," said Daring, rising from his couch as I entered; "please be seated on my couch. Owing to my limited circumstances, I am unable to offer you a chair," laughing sarcastically.

I sat down on the prison couch, and took a survey of my surroundings. A dim lamp in the outer hall furnished barely light enough to distinguish objects in Number Nine, and filled the place with a gloom that caused me to shudder.

What a place for a human being to pass days, months, even years! I thought. And yet, some men regarded it as a mere joke. Ugh! I shuddered again at thought of spending even one night in such a dismal place.

Daring paced slowly back and forth the length of the cell, apparently waiting until I had completed my examination of the surroundings. His hands were free, as the irons were only used when he was taken from the cell—the thick stone walls and heavy, barred doors being deemed sufficient security against escape.

"You must excuse me, Mr. Smith, for thus imposing on your good nature," he at length began, "but I have some matters to communicate to you, and I could not content myself to wait until morning."

Very singular, I thought, but certainly characteristic of the man; and the more I pondered over his actions the more I became mystified.

"Have you heard any news from the jury?" he asked.

"None, excepting that there was a probability of their disagreeing."

"Good; that improves my chance for freedom."

"I cannot see how," I said, "for you will have another trial, and a new jury, and unless you produce some evidence that will clear you—conviction is certain."

"For a long time he paced back and forth, until I began to lose patience and thought of terminating the interview, for I was growing more and more uneasy each moment. And I saw a something—a steely glitter in his eyes that increased my fears."

"I have been a bad man, Mr. Smith, but if I can get clear this time I shall mend my ways."

Hypocrite! I thought, for I was sure I saw that in his face that belied his pretended repentance.

"Really, Mr. Daring, I must leave you, as my time is precious. If you want anything, or have anything to suggest, come at once to the point, and I will do all I can for you."

"I beg your pardon," he said, humbly, "if I have trespassed too much on your valuable time. You have been very kind to me, Mr. Smith, and I only wish I could repay you in a substantial manner. It is so cheering to have company in this lonesome place that I have been tempted to prolong your visit to the utmost extent."

Again he resumed his tireless tramp back and forth in the cell.

What could the man mean? Was he intent on trying the insanity plea, or was he really a madman?

His manner was certainly strange, and some hidden object had induced him to send for me.

"I will call and see you in the morning," I said, rising from the couch and buttoning my coat around me.

"One moment, Mr. Smith. Just please examine the bars of that window, will you, and tell me how long it would take a man to cut them off and bid adieu to these uninviting quarters."

Again I looked at the fellow, and a comical smile wreathed his handsome face.

"I could not say, nor would I advise any such attempt," I answered somewhat sternly.

"Just glance out there, Mr. Smith, and see what a splendid perspective view it affords, under the rays of the young moon."

Whatever possessed me to comply with his foolish wish I cannot imagine, unless it was a desire to view the scene from the barred window. But, without taking thought, I stepped up to the narrow aperture and gazed out.

Suddenly I felt my hands grasped and pulled behind me, and before I could turn I felt my wrists encircled by a pair of handcuffs with a click that locked them securely. As soon as I could do so I turned fiercely upon my antagonist, and saw a smile of triumph on his face.

"Be quiet, Mr. Smith," he said, in a pleasant tone; "do not make any noise now, or I shall be under the painful necessity of shutting off your breath."

"Villain!" I hissed, "what does this mean?"

For I comprehended that I was in his power, and utterly helpless.

"Do be quiet now, Mr. Smith. I was merely trying on a pair of bracelets that the turnkey left in reach this morning. They fit you neatly. I will trouble you to take your hat."

And he took off my hat and placed it upon his own head.

"Now, Mr. Smith, I will trouble you further to exchange coats with me; but really I shall be obliged to cut your coat somewhat in order to get it over those bracelets."

And now I comprehended the villain's plan. He intended to dress in my clothes and pass the near-sighted jailer.

"Please don't remonstrate, Mr. Smith, not a word," and he proceeded to divest me of my coat.

What could I do? If I only dared to shout and raise an alarm. But, no; I saw a determination in the villain's eye that told me it would be poor discretion.

Having taken my coat and hat, he produced a large handkerchief, and despite my fiercest struggles overpowered me, and cast me on the couch and gagged me with it.

There I lay speechless, and utterly helpless, while he bound me to the couch with strips of blanket. I could only grind my teeth in rage, and inwardly curse my stupidity for allowing myself to be so easily drawn into such a net.

Donning my coat and hat he looked like my second self, being about the same size, and bidding me good-night he left the cell.

I heard the turnkey open the door for him to pass, and then he came on to Number Nine, and swung the heavy door, and the lock clicked.

Oh, the agony of that fearful night!

Unable to move hand or foot I lay there in the most intense suffering of body and mind. To sleep was impossible, and after vainly strug-

gling to free my limbs I sunk down exhausted and unconscious.

A cool wet hand on my brow roused me to consciousness again, and I lay as in a dream.

Where was I? I could not recollect; my mind was almost a blank. Slowly it all came back, and I opened my eyes. A woman's hand pressed the cooling water on my brow, and poured a fiery liquid upon my lips. And then it all came back to me—my fearful struggles and strains, and now I was again free. I tried to speak but could not articulate a word.

Slowly my strength returned and I was able to sit up and speak. Strong arms carried me out of that dreadful cell, and placed me on a bed in the cheering light of a large room, and kindly faces bent over me, and again I knew no more.

Hours passed; then I awoke with renewed strength, and arose from the bed.

Lewis Ayres attended me, and answered my many questions, as I hurriedly asked them.

Jack Daring had escaped, and his absence was not known until I was found lying in his cell in an unconscious condition. Pursuit had been organized, but artful accomplices had aided him, and he was safe.

I told Lewis my adventure, and my brother attorneys gathered around and extended their kindly sympathies.

I shall never forget my experience in Cell Number Nine.

## Wrought by a Woman.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

A wild, stormy March night, with a fierce wind abroad that sent sheets of sleet in gusts against the window pane, and that shook firm houses until they trembled like frightened slaves before a tyrant.

A night when, if ever, one best likes to draw the easy-chairs and ottomans close to the fire, and gather all the household in a quiet, contented circle that shall mutually aid in forgetting the tempest without, and being thankful for comfort within.

At Bluestone House, on that rough March night, all the household were gathered in the cozy little sitting-room upstairs, that was devoted exclusively to Mrs. Davenport's use, and very seldom opened even to Agnes Keswick, her niece—the wondrously beautiful girl who was sitting so quietly, so gracefully, at an end window, looking out into the darkness.

This was a gorgeous little room—this sitting-room of Mrs. Davenport's, one of three in the private suite of her own; a small, octagonal apartment, furnished in crimson and gold, with due regard for Mrs. Davenport's brilliant brunette beauty. A jewel of a boudoir, on the same scale of lavish extravagance as was everything else at Bluestone House, which, since the death of its master and owner, had been refurnished from attic to basement by his widow, who had not been long in making up her mind that her hour had at last arrived when she was free to enjoy her life in her own way.

So she made a perfect paradise of Bluestone House, invited guests, instituted a series of enviable entertainments, and, in the fullness of a sudden impulse, wrote to her niece, Agnes Keswick, whom she had never seen, but knew to be very poor, to come and be her companion, sister, friend.

Then, the instant she laid her bright, black eyes on the girl's glorious face, she knew she had committed an unpardonable blunder against herself; even while she took the small, shapely hand in her own, and kissed the proud, calm face, she hated the girl, and set to work to scheme how to retract her words, and send the girl back to her obscurity.

Not that she thought her own life less fascinating because of the vivid contrast—for Helen Davenport was a woman who was capable of holding her own anywhere; but because, away down in her heart that had never been touched until Warren Trelawney had crossed her path, very lately, she feared lest the charm of this high-bred patriotic girl, with her eyes the hue of the spring violets, and her hair like liquid bronze, might not pass unheeded by the one man for whose sake she thought the world worth losing.

If Warren Trelawney had been her betrothed lover, she would have smiled at the preposterousness of his disloyalty, for even her shallow, surface mind appreciated the grand nobility and honor of his character, which would always have kept him hers.

But, not a word had ever been said; not a look from Trelawney's grave, handsome eyes had ever borne a suspicion of ardent admiration; and, while Helen Davenport had given him all her heart, within a month of acquaintance, and had sworn to win him, she yet feared the possible influence of Agnes Keswick's presence; and fearing—naturally hating with that most dangerous of hates—a jealous woman's.

But, there had been no immediate help for it. Agnes had been invited, and Agnes had come, and the written understanding had been for a year, at least.

And, of that year, seven months had passed when this dreadful March storm of sleet and snow and rain and wind was come, and Mrs. Davenport and Agnes, the "household" at Bluestone House, exclusive of the corps of servants, were sitting together in the crimson and gold boudoir.

Looking out into the darkness, Agnes was perfectly unconscious of the tableau being enacted behind her; or of the tempest raging in Mrs. Davenport's breast that exalted in violence the fury of the storm without.

The light was turned dimly down, and glowed like a silver moon through the globe; the fire in the steel grate added ruffled luster to the brilliant gipsy figure crouching before it, on a white bear-skin rug, and watching the motionless figure at the window with a red sparkle in the jetty eyes.

There wasn't an assuring expression on Helen Davenport's face, as she sat there, slowly twisting her fingers together, until the horrid monotony of the motion would have driven one nervous to see.

There was a hard, defiant look around her well-shaped mouth, that was strangely at variance with a curious distress and disappointment in her eyes; and contrasted with all these plainly-expressed emotions, that savage, relentless motion of her expressive hands seemed almost inhuman.

Suddenly, on the stillness, sounded a summons at the grand entrance; but Mrs. Davenport never moved her watchful eyes off Agnes' form until she saw what she seemed waiting for—a sudden yet slight confusion.

Then she smiled oddly, as she arose languidly.

"Can it be possible there are visitors such a night! Bluestone House must present unusual attractions."

Agnes arose from her seat and crossed the floor to the door, her face slightly flushed, her violet eyes glowing like fathomless wells.

"I think it is Mr. Trelawney for me, aunt Helen. I will go down."

"Mr. Trelawney? for you?"

If Agnes could have heard the doom in those words, or known the frightful thoughts that accompanied them!

But her cheeks only turned a shade nearer the hue of the oleander flower, as she bowed slightly in assent, and then took Warren Trelawney's card the footman handed her, as she passed down the hall.

Mrs. Davenport closed the door with hands trembling with passion, and then sat down in a light bamboo chair, her face bleached of its warm Southern hue, her dark eyes flashing a fury that would make one shiver to see.

Trelawney to see her—alone! Can it be possible all these months of his absence in Europe have succeeded in making him forget me, and remember her—her?

She bit her lip until a scarlet drop fell on her white hand.

"He has been here four times since he came home, and I discovered nothing; have they outwitted me? Is there love-making going on? or—am I a jealous fool, whose fears are easily aroused?"

She stepped across the room as lightly as a cat, her trailing skirts making not even the tenderest rustle; then, at the door out of which she was going she stopped, and looked curiously at herself in her dressing-mirror opposite.

"If you are neglected for her, Helen Davenport—if you find that she has alienated the affections of the man whom you love with a passion that is stronger than life itself, are you willing to let her feel the weight of your insulted hand?"

And the slow smile that gathered in her eyes, that slightly moved her lip, was all-sufficient answer.

She went through the door, and down a flight of carpeted stairs that led directly into the fernery adjoining the drawing-room, from whence low, murmurous voices reached her ears, as she stole silently among the aisles, between the branching foliage, until she reached the green silken curtain that draped the entrance from the room where Trelawney and Agnes were.

She listened in a perfect agony of rage and pain.

"It must be at once, my darling. In a fortnight I sail again for Europe, and I want you with me. Tell me you will go, Agnes, dear."

"Oh, yes, I will be ready; and yet, it is all so sudden, Warren. Only to night to know of your love for me, and to be your wife so soon!"

"Can you not trust your precious self to me so suddenly? You are sure I love you, my darling."

"Oh, yes, yes! Only I have not had time to become accustomed to it; all I can realize at present is, how blissfully happy I am. I have loved you so long, Warren."

Helen clenched her hands till every nail left cruel impress on her palm.

"Then you will be ready in two weeks from to-day; and then such a happy life will dawn as I never dreamed was reserved for me."

For a half-hour the half-maddened woman listened, then dragged herself away, with limbs that almost refused to do her will, with a brain fairly boiling with anguish, fury, jealousy.

That night the storm without and the storm within raged in unabated fury. The next morning saw the warm spring sunshine flooding the outer world, and on Helen Davenport's face lingered not a trace of the soul-desolation of those sleepless hours; in her usual courtly manner, her gentle courtesy, was no sign of the oath recorded in her heart, and daily renewed in the same breath in which she congratulated Agnes, or suggested hints regarding the wedding-trousseau, which was her own gift to the bride.

And so the fourteen days wore on; varied by calls from Trelawney, by business visits from tradesmen, and particularly carpenters whom Mrs. Davenport wanted to repair several places on the premises before the quiet wedding.

And then, fair as an April day could be, Agnes Keswick's day of happiness dawned.

The ceremony was arranged at nine, in the morning, in order to reach New York in ample time for the steamship that sailed at noon. The few guests—the bridegroom's aged mother, the rector's wife, Mrs. Davenport's stepson, summoned from college, were all waiting in the drawing-room, while Mr. Trelawney, the rector, and Mrs. Davenport were chatting in the library.

"You had better go up-stairs and tap on Agnes' door, Mr. Trelawney, had you not? It is time she was down; I think she is ready, notwithstanding her whim of permitting no one to assist her at her toilet."

Trelawney's heart gave a thrill of delight at Helen's hint that Agnes was alone; he went up the stairs, two at a time, and tapped at her door, listening with throbbing pulse for her low "come in."

But there was no answer, and he rapped again and again, his face assuming an anxious look.

"Can she be ill! can she have fainted?" he asked himself; then put his lips to the key-hole. "Agnes—are you ready? Agnes!"

The room was still as death. A vague, awful fear seized him, and on an impulse born of the horror, he forced the door with a tremendous kick, that brought Mrs. Davenport rushing up-stairs, to find him standing bewildered in the room that had no trace of Agnes' presence, but every possible token of a sudden, hurried departure. Her bridal dress lay on the yet unmade bed; her traveling-trunk was open, and in great confusion; her wardrobe door stood ajar; her bureau drawers were open, and a handkerchief, unfolded, as though it had been forgotten, lay half in it.

With blanched face, Trelawney turned to Mrs. Davenport, who stood stock still, as if rooted to the ground, her eyes roaming from object to object in utter consternation and speechless bewilderment.

"What does it mean?" Trelawney said, huskily. "Where is she! has she—has she—gone away?"

Then Mrs. Davenport smelt helplessly down in the nearest chair.

"Oh, dear—what shall I do! what can have happened?"

Then, starting suddenly from her seat, she turned almost fiercely upon Trelawney.

"What do you stand there for, as helpless as a baby? Why don't you send somebody to the depot, to the telegraph office? Ring for Connors! call them all up—everybody—and let them see for themselves! I will send for her maid, and let her see what clothes are gone—so we can trace her by description."

She was all excitement now, almost hysterical, while Trelawney went down-stairs with an awful agony in his face.

Ten minutes later, Fifine, the maid, discovered the absence of a gray silk suit and a shawl; and then telegraphic dispatches flew in

all directions. While the guests went home, and the heart-stricken lover was left to bear it as best he could—this sharp blow from Agnes' hand, and the impenetrable mystery around it.

That night, when all was quiet at Bluestone House, Helen Davenport walked the floor of her room, and laughed to herself.

"Let them weep and wail! When their hearts bleed to all eternity, they will not have imagined a tithe of what I have endured! Let them mourn without consolation—I have my revenge, my glorious revenge!"

A quiet October day; the atmosphere saturated with that peculiar red-gold glory that is so rare and beautiful; when trees were, silently putting on their royal attire, and every morning's sunrise made the whole landscape one sheet of glittering diamond crystals. A day when, if ever on earth, content and peace should intrude one—a day when, of all days, Warren Trelawney felt he was most hopelessly despairing, because of the utter failures that crowned every effort to find his lost bride.

And into this autumn glory of weather, into this winter gloom of soul, came a letter by the mail, so strange, so suggestive, that instantly the whole world changed to him into one vast pulse of throbbing, feverish excitement.

This was the brief letter, dated New York, written in a correct, lady-like hand:

"If Mr. Warren Trelawney will name the price he will pay for his future happiness, he may address Knwledge, Gen. P. O."

The next mail carried his reply, begging an interview, to which came an address that he was not two hours in reaching—to find Fifine, the dressing-maid, who had lately left Bluestone House.

"I want to leave this country, and return to France. I have no money; but I have a secret on